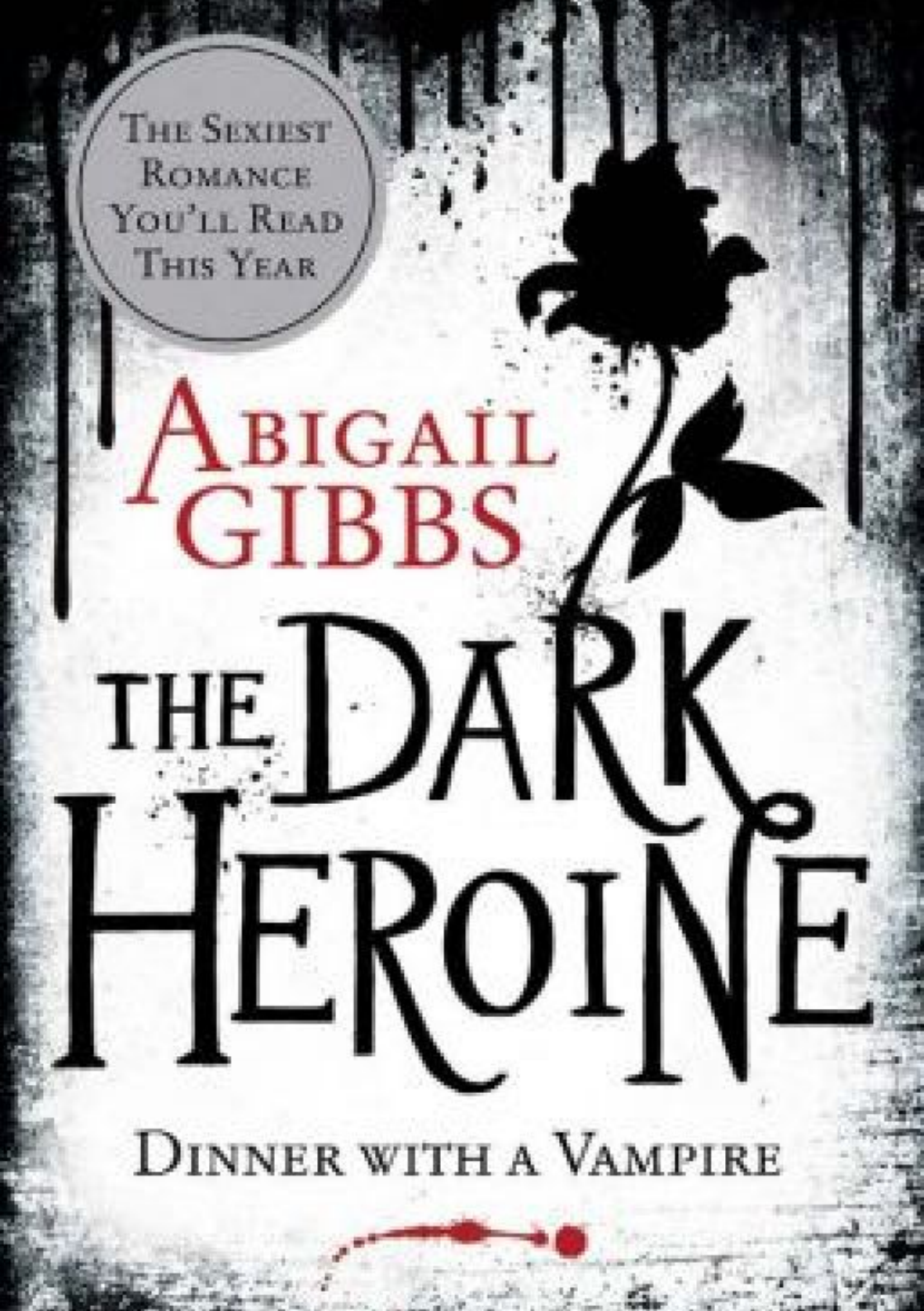
The Sexiest Romance You'll Read This Year
Abigail Gibbs
The Dark Heroine
Dinner with a Vampire

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# The Dark Heroine: Dinner With A Vampire

By AuthorAbigailGibbs

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Chapter 1

# Dinner With A Vampire. Did I Mention I'm Vegetarian? (1)

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The Dark Heroine: Dinner With A Vampire

Book 1 of the Dark Heroine Series

*

***Please note: This is a twenty chapter sample of Dinner With A Vampire*** (formally known as Dinner With A Vampire. Did I Mention I'm Vegetarian?, hence the chapter titles). It is completely unedited, and considering I began writing it aged fifteen, the grammar, spelling, punctuation, pace and plot can all be a little out. Be forgiving of my young teenage self.

However, the full edited version, published by HarperCollins, is available to buy in both ebook and paperback form, on Kindle, Nook, Kobo and Apple devices, and from Amazon, Barnes and Noble and all the other usual suspects, as of the 13th September, depending on where in the world you are from.

Please see my profile page for further information.

Enjoy!

*

Thank you to Soraya, Jaz and Becky for always being there. Thank you to Wattpad, for helping me get where I am now. And thank you to Seth, for his endless support, inspiration and ideas.

Every chapter includes a video box to the right which contains a song that adds to or encapsulates the mood of the chapter. If you feel like it, have a listen as you read!

*

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Trafalgar Square is probably not the best place to stand at one o'clock in the morning. In fact, it is probably not the best place to be if you are totally alone.

My name is Violet Lee, and I was standing in the shadow of Nelson's Column, Trafalgar Square, London, shivering as the supposed warm air of July blew through the square. I shuddered, pulling my coat tightly around myself, seriously regretting my choice of wardrobe - a short, skimpy black dress.

The sacrifices I made for a good night out.

I glanced about anxiously, scanning the empty streets for any sign of my friends. So much for getting a 'late night snack'. The sushi bar was only a two-minute walk away, yet twenty minutes had passed. I rolled my eyes; no doubt they were in some guy's pants by now.

Good for them. I mean, it's not as though they had to worry about little old Violet.

I walked over towards the benches, sheltered by the sparse, and tonight, gloomy canopy of trees. Being

seventeen-almost-eighteen was great, until your friends ditched you. I sighed as I took a seat, bitterly regretting the decision to wait behind.

Taking one last glance around the square, I pulled out my mobile, hitting speed dial. It continued to ring until eventually, the answer phone cut in.

"Hi, this is Ruby. I can't answer right now, so leave a message after the tone. Lovage!"

I groaned, frustrated as the tone beeped.

"Ruby, where the hell are you?! If you're with that guy, I swear I'll kill you! It's bloody freezing out here! Soon as you get this, call back!"

I ended the call, slipping the phone back into the inside pocket of my coat, knowing that she would probably never get the message.

Rubbing my hands together and drawing my knees up to my chest in a bid to keep warm, I debated whether I should just get a cab home. But if Ruby did turn up, I'd be in trouble.

Resigning myself to a long wait, I gently laid my head on my knees in the quiet, lazily watching the orange haze that coated the city of London - my hometown.

The peace of the square was unusual. Nothing moved and the dull hum of far away London traffic seemed to fade away into eerie silence. Late-night drinkers disappeared into a side-alley on the opposite side of the road, stumbling along until they're raucous laughter was lost to the darkness.

I wondered which of the two boys we had met tonight had struck lucky with Ruby. I felt a pang of regret, wishing I could be as carefree and... loose as she was. But I couldn't. Not after Joel.

More minutes passed and I began to feel uneasy. Nobody had passed through for a while and the cold night air was descending like a blanket around my exposed legs. I glanced about for a cab but the roads were empty; the square deserted.

I was pulling my phone back out, thinking I could try Ruby again or call my father and ask him to pick me up when all of a sudden, something flickered in the corner of my eye. Almost dropping my phone I jerked

up, heart in my mouth, scanning the square for any sign of movement.

Nothing. I shook my head, the panic waning. It was probably just a bird.

Shakily I began dialling my home number in, the cold numbing my fingers. I glanced up every few seconds, willing my breathing to slow.

But no... something had definitely moved then.

A shadow had passed across one of the huge fountains, almost too quick for my eyes to see. Yet the square was deserted, save for a few pigeons plucking at the bins. I shook my head, pressing my phone to my ear. The line crackled, ringing feebly, breaking every few seconds.

I tapped my foot impatiently. "C'mon..." I muttered, glancing at the screen. Full signal.

My eyes wandered about as the number dialled and dialled, lingering on Nelson's Column, towering hundreds of feet in the air. The blazing floodlights that lit up the statue at the very top flickered, like a

flame in the breeze. In a moment they stilled again, as intense and bright as before.

I shivered involuntarily, but not from the cold. Silently I begged someone to answer the phone; but the line crackled and with one last pitiful ring, went dead.

I stared at it, wide-eyed, before adrenaline began to rush into my veins and instinct cut in.

Slipping off my heels my eyes flickered to the column, watching in disbelief as the shadow I had seen just moments before swept across the statue, vanishing from view as quickly as it had come.

Fumbling with the last strap I wrenched the shoe from my foot, snatching both up in my hands. I started forward. But no sooner had I taken a few steps forward, I froze, rooted to the spot.

A gang of men, clothed in trench coats and carrying long, sharpened canes were descending the steps. Their grim, weather-beaten faces were dark and heavily scarred, every brow set in an unwavering, determined line. Their heavy footfall rang in my ears,

pounding out an uneven march on the paving as they moved ever closer.

Stunned, I shrank back into the shadows, noiselessly folding myself into the bench. Hardly daring to breathe I tried to make myself as small as possible whilst inching towards the edge of the square and escape. Something eerie was going on here, unless this was a film convention.

Somehow I seriously doubted it.

The man at the head of the group barked something inaudible and the men spread out, creating a line as wide as the square, stretching from one lion to the other. There were easily thirty of them, maybe more.

As one, they came to a halt just in front of the column, totally still, only their coats moving as they billowed behind them.

Not even the trees made a sound.

I hardly dared to breathe as I stared, sensing that something was going to happen. Every one of the men looked straight ahead in unnerving concentration, watching; waiting. I briefly glanced

towards the top of the column but the statue was bathed in light as normal, the only shadows being those cast by the men and the trees that sheltered me. A few leaves drifted languidly to the ground, settling on the bench beside me.

Then it happened.

The square came alive in a frenzy of movement and out of nowhere something sprung from behind the trees, soaring high above me and landing as lithely as a cat on the hard stone, not even ten feet away. I blinked, not believing what my eyes saw as a person, but before I could take a second look whatever it was had disappeared.

The gang in the centre, taken as much by surprise as I was rippled, ducking and staggering back a few paces in panic. Those at the very end of the line edged inwards, order only restored as the man I presumed to be the leader raised a hand and from his coat pulled a silvery baton, one end sharpened to a lethal point. With a flick of his wrist it became twice as long. He spun the baton a few times, as though admiring the way it glinted when it caught

the light. His lips curled into a satisfied smile and he stilled, waiting once more.

He was quite young- perhaps a few years older than I was. He was tall and lean, his skin free of any scars unlike so many of those around him. Cut short, his hair was bleached so it was almost white, a stark contrast to his leathery coat and tanned skin.

His smile widened as his eyes darted towards the figure that had landed just in front of me. I drew in a sharp breath, expecting him to spot me but his attention was whipped away as a man stepped out from around the fountains.

No, not a man. A boy, not much older than I was.

And he was unlike anything I had ever seen.

His hair was a fiery red, spiked and unkempt. His eyes were sunken, skin ashen pale and almost translucent, pulled taught over hollow cheeks. He too was tall and lean, but beneath his tight shirt I could see the rippling trace of muscles. His arms were just as pale but covered in red blotches, as though he had

been badly sun-burnt. His lips too were stained a bright, bloody red.

I blinked, and he was gone. I searched the square as others appeared, all boys of about my age, all with the same alabaster pale skin and haggard gaze, all darkly striking, all circling the group in the middle, faces twisted into a mixture of amusement and disgust. They appeared from nowhere, flitting from one side to the other at an almost... inhuman speed, vanishing and emerging within a second.

The boy with the flaming hair appeared again, leaning casually against the fountain as though standing at the bar. Nearest him stood a young man with sandy blonde hair who I recognized as the one who had sprung from behind me.

Silently I counted the new arrivals. They were five in total, offhandedly herding the group into the centre like animals. The men's faces were contorted into a picture of fear and loathing as they broke their ranks, stumbling into a defensive circle with their stakes lowered. Only the leader remained unmoved, his smile becoming a smirk as he clasped his baton to

his side. His gaze remained fixed dead ahead, staring at the column with uncanny concentration.

He was waiting, I realized.

Suddenly, a person dropped from the column - all hundred and fifty-six feet of it. I saw them fall, surely to their death, plummeting faster and faster towards the ground. But I watched, amazed, as the person landed nimbly on the stone, dropping to a crouch directly in front of the gang's leader.

The square stilled and the leader, for the first time, stirred.

"Kaspar Varn, such a pleasure to see you again."

The man straightened up, his face blank and unreadable. He was as tall as the leader but his bearing and well-built, muscled stature demanded far more presence.

"The pleasure's all mine Claude," he answered coolly, his gaze sweeping right to left. He gave a curt nod to the sandy haired boy and I managed to steal a look at him.

He, like the others, had pallid, slightly sallow skin, devoid of any colour or blush. His dark, almost black hair was streaked with shades of brown and was windswept, his fringe falling across his forehead. If anything, his features were gaunter than any of the others, his face shadowy as though he had not slept for days.

"Perhaps he doesn't sleep..." a voice in my head said. I shook it off.

But as the thought crossed my mind he seemed to look past the sandy haired boy, his brow creasing a fraction. I held my breath, realizing he was looking directly at me... but if he saw me he choose to pay no attention as he turned back to the leader, Claude, his face clearing and becoming impassive again.

"What do you want Claude? I have no time to waste on you and the Pierre clan."

Claude's smile widened, running a single finger down the sharp edge of his stake. "Yet you came."

He waved his hand dismissively. "We were hunting anyway, it was no great distance."

I shuddered. Hunting? Hunting for what in a city?

Claude chuckled darkly. "As are we."

In a flash he brought the stake up to the other man's chest, thrusting forward. But it never found its mark. The man - Kaspar, reached up and brushed it away, moving at an impossible speed. It seemed to take no effort; he hardly blinked, but Claude lurched backwards as though he had been hit by a truck. The stake clattered to the floor, the metal ring echoing in the silence.

Claude staggered, tripped, then slowly regained his balance and straightened himself up. His narrow eyes darted towards the stake and then back to the man stood unnaturally still in front of him. His lips curled back into a smile.

"Tell me Kaspar... how's your mother?"

Out of nowhere, the pale man's hand snatched forward, seizing Claude's throat. I watched, horrified, as his eyes bulged and his feet slowly left the floor, the colour draining from his face. He coughed and spluttered, his feet pitifully writhing in mid-air. It

would be quite funny, almost slapstick if I couldn't hear the sickening sound of someone dying.

His hands grappled with the wrists of the other, but he soon began to give up as slowly... agonisingly slowly, he turned purple. I looked on desperately, trying to work out why such a simple statement would warrant... this.

Suddenly though, he let go. Claude crumpled to the ground, gasping for breath, feverishly rubbing his neck.

I breathed a silent sigh of relief.

But the man collapsed on the ground didn't. His face seemed to show some sort of recognition as he stared up at the maddened face of Kaspar Varn, his whimpers becoming pleas as he shuffled back, squirming and grabbing the hem of a coat one of him men was wearing.

They did not move.

The chest of the other man was heaving and a deranged, sick expression was twisted onto his face.

He slowly lowered his hand, clenching it tightly into a fist.

"Do you have any last words, Claude-Pierre?" he growled, almost sarcastically, the menace in his voice barely restrained.

The leader drew in several long, shaky breaths. He hastily wiped away the sweat and tears on his sleeve, seeming to brace himself.

"Only that I hope you and your bloody Kingdom burn in hell."

The pale man's lips widened into a smirk.

"Wishful thinking Pierre."

With that he pounced forward, his head ducking behind Claude Pierre's neck.

There was a sickening crack.

I gagged.

My hands instinctively clapped to my mouth as bile and with it, fear, rose in my throat. Tears leaked from my eyes and for a minute, I did not care who heard or saw me.

He had killed him. In cold blood.

Snapped his neck. With his bare hands.

But self-preservation kicked in as his lifeless body dropped to the stone. I was a witness to a murder and I had watched enough of the six o'clock news to know what happened to witnesses who stuck around. I had to get out of here.

I had to tell someone.

"If you ever get out of here..." that same niggling voice murmured.

I hated to admit it, but it was right.

All hell had broken loose.

The pale skins had jumped onto the men; a huge, bloody fight breaking out. Tanned bodies dropped to the floor, blood splattering everywhere, the men barely having time to turn their stakes to these... these... elegant killers and their inhuman speed before they took their last breath.

I whimpered on the bench, drawn as far into the shadows as I could possibly get, praying to every God alive that they would spare me.

In less than the time it would take me to cross the square it was over.

I looked at the carnage they had created... Streaky veins of blood spattered the stone paving and bodies lay everywhere, several floating in the fountains, staining the water a cheery red. One man near me lay on his back, his face still paralyzed with fear, blood trickling from his neck onto the stone.

Six teenagers had just slaughtered thirty men.

There was a bloodbath in Trafalgar Square.

A London Bloodbath.

Any other time and I would have laughed at the insanity of it all. But not now. I wanted to scream and run to the nearest police station and get these monsters locked up.

"Kaspar, are we going to clean this one up? Or just leave it?" said the one stood nearest the fountain, his flaming red hair ablaze in the light.

"No. We'll leave it. Just as a little message for any other hunters who think they can cross us," he replied. "Scum," he added, spitting on the nearest limp body.

His voice had lost its cool and had been replaced with a deep, almost satisfied, sneer.

Anger began to override the fear and the gruesomeness as I watched him carelessly kick the arm of another dying man out of his way, causing him to let out one last meagre moan.

"Jerk," I breathed.

He froze.

So did I. I held my breath, stomach knotted.

He could not possibly have heard me from across the square. That was just not possible.

But slowly, leisurely almost, he turned so that he faced me.

"What do we have here?" he chuckled darkly, his lips curling into that same cruel smirk.

Instinct worked faster than my mind and before I knew what I was doing I had jumped off the bench, sprinting my way across the square. Leaving my heels far behind, my feet thudded against the cold stone as I ran, literally for my life. The nearest police station was not too far, and I bet I knew London better than them. If I just took a few shortcuts...

"And where do you think you're going girly?"

I inhaled sharply as I came into contact with something hard and unbearably cold, so cold I sprung back from it instantly.

Stood directly in front of me was the pale man.

I recoiled, eyes darting from the spot he had been stood in before to the one he stood in now.

That wasn't possible.

I backed away, my hands grabbing at the air behind me as though they expected some magical saviour to

appear. He didn't even flinch, as though a girl running into his chest was an everyday occurrence.

"Noth... nothing... I was just... I..." I stuttered, eyes cycling between the bodies, the man and the road: my only possible escape route.

"To report us?" he questioned. He already knew the answer but my eyes widened guiltily and he leaned in so close I could see that his eyes were a vivid shade of emerald. "I'm afraid you can't do that," he whispered.

Close-up I could not help but notice how staggeringly handsome he was. Something deep in the pit of my stomach stirred. I recoiled again, repulsed.

"To hell I can!" I yelled, ducking around him and making another frantic getaway. I ran, glancing behind me. To my astonishment, none of them pursued me. Spurred on I kept running, the tiniest spark of hope beginning to ignite. I was just metres away from the road when I glanced back again.

This time he seemed to sigh exasperatingly and I pushed myself to run faster.

My feet were just about to step out onto the road when I was yanked back, a hand clutching at the collar of my coat. I teetered, fighting for balance whilst also fighting the hand that restrained me. I wrestled, kicking and screaming but it was no use.

Turning around with my eyes ablaze and sounding a lot braver than I felt, I screeched out a threat.

"You have ten seconds to get off me freak, before I kick you so hard in the bollocks that you'll wish you were never born!"

He chuckled again. "You're a feisty one, aren't you girly?"

As he laughed, I caught sight of his teeth, all perfectly white. But there was a pair of unnaturally long, pointed incisors.

Hunting. Hunters.

Something in my brain registered.

Just as quickly, rational thought dismissed it.

I struggled again, trying to get closer enough to kick him but his grip tightened on my collar, holding me firmly away.

"You saw all of that."

His words were chillingly cold. It was a statement, not a question but I answered it anyway.

"What do you think?" I retorted, pouring as much sarcasm into my voice as I could muster.

"I think you're going to have to come with us," he growled, taking my elbow and beginning to drag me away.

I opened my mouth, but he was quicker.

"Scream and I swear I will kill you," he murmured, clamping his hand down on my mouth.

And thrashing and biting, I was dragged away; dragged away from the gruesome bloodbath these pale monsters had created.

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Chapter 2

# Dinner With A Vampire. Did I Mention I'm Vegetarian? (2)

Dinner With A Vampire. Did I Mention I'm Vegetarian? (Chapter 2)

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Second chapter!! Enjoy!!! [Has been edited now, however this is an ongoing process, feedback always appreciated!!]

v=ysSxxIqKNN0" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ysSxxIqKNN0(Linkin Park New divide)

HYPERLINK "http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h4PKbEY1vgg" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h4PKbEY1vgg(Paramore Conspiracy)

We flew through the streets, speeding up to a sprint as we left the square. Kaspar had a firm grip on my wrist, dragging me along in his wake. His fingernails cut deep into my arm and I felt them tearing open my skin, gouging out considerable amounts of flesh. I silently winced but did not say anything: I would not give them the satisfaction.

We weaved from alley to alley, Kaspar at the front, leading us down roads I never knew existed. Already I could hear the whining sirens of police cars and the side streets were awash with flashing blue lights.

"Kaspar, he's involved," the boy to my right suddenly said, stopping. He turned to Kaspar as he sliced and diced my wrist, as though waiting for instruction.

"He?" Kaspar snapped, coming to a shuddering halt. The only thing that stopped me from falling to the floor was his rigid grip on my wrist. I hissed from the pain and he looked fleetingly down, almost surprised, before he let go. "What do you mean he?"

The boy, a couple of years younger, gave the other a meaningful look. His eyes were exactly the same shade of emerald as Kaspar's and his features

similar: high cheek bones, sunken eyes - a little less gaunt perhaps.

Kaspar snarled and his eyes darted upwards.

"Wait here," he ordered. He thrust me forward; straight into the chest of one of the other men. "Fabian, look after girly here."

For the second time that night I hit something abnormally rigid. He too was cold and I sprung back like I had been burnt, toppling over into the gutter beside the pavement. Instantly however, something was pulling me back upright.

I looked down in surprise. A hand almost as pale as my own had caught my wrist.

"Don't fall," a soft voice said. I followed the arm up, dazed, to find the smiling face of the boy who had jumped over me in Trafalgar Square, sky blue eyes twinkling down at me.

For a brief, ludicrous moment I admired his fair, untidy hair and muscled chest, just visible beneath the unbuttoned collar of his shirt before my mind

caught up and I pulled my hand away, horrified at my thoughts.

Unperturbed, however, he carried on.

"I'm Fabian," he said, holding the same hand back out.

Instinctively, I shrunk away, trying to conspicuously rub my hands and wrists on my coat where their blood-tainted hands had touched me. He frowned, eyeing me as I backed away, his hand left hanging in the air.

"We won't hurt you, you know."

Four other pairs of eyes watched too, tensed and waiting for me to run. But I had given up hope of that. Instead I was resting on the fact that this Kaspar would be gone long enough for a passing police car to spot us.

"That back there," he gestured along the street, "Was necessary. I know it doesn't look that way but you have to believe me when I say it needed to be done."

I stopped. "Necessary? How is killing fellow people necessary? Don't patronize me, I'm not a child."

The words were out of my mouth before I had time to think. My hands tightened around my wrists and I stopped rubbing. They seemed shocked that I had finally found my voice and Fabian's eyes darted behind me repeatedly.

"Then how old are you?"

I closed my mouth, hesitant about whether to tell them but glad they had ignored the rest of my outburst.

"Well?"

I bit on my lip.

"Seventeen," I murmured.

"I didn't know seventeen-year old girls wore such short dresses these days."

I jumped at the sound of an amused voice behind me and spun around, my dark hair whipping around behind me, heavy fringe settling over my eyes.

Kaspar was leant against a lamppost, the grotesque smirk tugging at his lips again. His eyes raked my form and I wrapped the coat tightly around my form to try and cover the flimsy dress so inadequate at covering my fair flesh.

His smirk only widened. "Blushing really clashes with those purple eyes of yours, girly."

I flinched at his reference to my eyes - an odd shade of purple. I should have been used to the insults. Between having freak eyes and being a devout vegetarian, I had my work cut out dodging insults.

I opened and closed my mouth several times before my eyes naturally averted. Suddenly though, his smirk vanished.

"Go!"

The others had already disappeared, swallowed by the darkness of an alley when I was thrown violently sideways, landing awkwardly behind a line of bins. The only light came from a seedy bar, tucked between a fire escape and an overflowing skip and

shed little light on the dark passage as I looked around, dazed.

I gasped for breath, winded, as I began to clamber to my feet, but a hand clamped down on my mouth, the other yanking me fully to my feet as I was half-dragged, half-carried along the alleyway, feet coated in grime from the paving.

It was not a moment too soon... for them. Too late for me.

Just as we rounded the corner at the end, blue lights illuminated the brick walls. A drunkard slumped against the skip in his own pool of sick shirked away, moaning loudly and muttering curses even I reddened at.

His moaning, though, could not drown out the growing sound of sirens, rising to a crescendo just a few streets away.

"You have to run faster," he stated simply. The panic was absent from his voice but it was written in every other face.

"Are you fucking crazy? Why should I run faster for you? You... murderer!"

The words were pouring from my mouth, unchecked. The adrenalin was back and it was quickly banishing the fear.

His eyes flashed dangerously and for a moment I thought they lost the emerald gleam.

"For the last time, we're not murderers."

He did not raise his voice nor change his tone but it still sent shivers running up my spine, making my hairs stand on end.

"Then what are you?"

The question hung in the air, nobody offering a reply. Instead, he pushed me onwards, tugging me from alley to alley and constantly changing direction as the police cordoned off more and more of the city, working a street behind us as we fled the centre.

London was coming alive. Every window reflected cyan blue as the protective ring sprawled outwards. I could hear the voices of the police, questioning

bewildered witnesses in their dressing gowns, awoken from their city slumber by the pounding fists of non-uniformed officials. I kept catching glimpses of them, confused as to why we could be so close - within earshot even and yet not be stopped.

Suddenly, my legs buckled under me and I tumbled to the ground, clutching at my chest.

"Come on!" Kaspar hissed, tugging on my sleeve.

"I can't!" I screeched. And I really couldn't. A stitch clutched at my ribs and my breaths were coming in short, sharp rasps.

"Tough," he said coolly, pulling me to my feet in one smooth movement before I abruptly collapsed again.

"I can't... breathe," I gasped, trying to do exactly that. A few tears leaked from my eyes which I hastily wiped away. "I'm going to pass out and die or something!"

"Oh, and what a loss that would be," he muttered dryly, rolling his eyes.

"I didn't volunteer for this!" I winced, dropping to my knees.

"No, you didn't. But you're a part of it now and how I see it..." He yanked me up by my collar. "You don't have any choice girly. Now go."

I did not move, still rubbing my chest.

"It's not girly. It's Violet."

Like a shot he was just inches away from me, forcing me against the wall as his hand wrapped tightly around my neck. A single finger was pressed against my vein, stroking it.

"And I'm the fucking Prince!" he snarled, grip tightening. My eyes widened and I struggled under him but his grip just tightened. I closed my eyes, not wanting to see his face, so close to mine and reeking of metallic blood. A single image flooded my mind behind my closed eyes: the lifeless body of Claude Pierre, crumpled and bleeding on the stone flag.

"I could snap that pretty neck of yours in two with less effort than it would take for you to breathe. Now

I suggest that you do what we say, because you can't outrun us and the police won't stop us."

I believed him. The sincerity in his voice was equal to the malice. I bowed my head, beaten.

"Better."

He grabbed my hand and began to tug my along the street. As I whirled around to follow him I saw a man sprinting into the end of the street. His dull beige suit looked odd when compared to the setting: the narrow streets and sordid bars of the back alleys. His feet slowed and he suddenly came to a stop, staring straight at us. His hand shot up to his head, almost as if in defeat.

I inhaled sharply. I knew him. He worked with my father... or rather for him.

He took a few hesitant steps forward, his eyes resting on me. For a brief moment, I met his gaze before he suddenly averted his eyes. He backed away again and my heart tugged as he raised a single flat palm, gesturing behind him as policemen and women rounded the corner. A crowd gathered, watching us

fearfully as Kaspar turned, allowed his eyes to roam across the spectators. He smirked, and then began to back away a few paces, tugging me to his side and dragging me with him.

He bent down to my ear and snarled, "Too slow."

He swept me up in his arms and flung me over his shoulder. I started to protest, pummelling his back but quickly worked out he was taking no notice.

Everything was a blur. The buildings were rapidly passing and when I looked up, the crowd had gone. In fact, we were not even in the same street.

My heart sunk. He had been right. They had not stopped us.

In minutes though, we were away. I did not want to know how fast they were moving - all I knew is it was fast enough to make my head spin. Another minute passed when all of a sudden, my feet made contact with the ground and I landed in a heap at Kaspar's feet beside two very expensive-looking cars. They were identical, from the perfectly polished black of

the body to the heavily tinted windows. Even the number plates were similar, bar one letter.

Aston Martin Rapides.

"I didn't know these things were on the market yet." I said, more as a statement rather than a question, but Kaspar chose to answer anyway.

"No, they're not," he replied smugly, stroking the side almost lovingly.

I examined the paint job, admiring the polished gleam that must have taken someone hours to achieve. "V-twelve, top speed 180mph, one of the fastest sedan's in the world. Beautiful car. Just the type of car I would love to key just to piss you off."

His mouth dropped open, but he quickly closed it. "If I find even one scratch..." he threatened.

"Yes, I know, you'll kill me." I muttered under my breath. "It's getting old..." I tagged on.

Nobody answered but someone behind me picked me up, bundling me into the backseat of the nearest car. He slammed the door and walked around, getting

in the other side. I recognized him as the one who shared the same eye colour as Kaspar - emerald.

Kaspar and Fabian got in the front, Kaspar driving.

"Put your seatbelt on," ordered the guy sat next to me. I ignored him, sitting there, rigid as a plank, with my arms folded. He gave an exasperated sigh and reached across, grabbing my belt.

"Freak," I muttered. The boy chuckled.

"The name is Cain, not freak. I'm his brother," he revealed, nodding in the direction of Kaspar. So that explained the uncanny likeness. "What did you say your name was again?"

"Violet. Violet Lee. Or violently to people I know."

"Suits," grunted Kaspar from the front seat. The car lapsed into silence. Gazing out the window I could see yet more police cars pass by. My stomach flipped as I saw a policeman glance over at us. His eyes locked with mine for a brief moment, before he turned back, seemingly unworried. I sighed.

Why wouldn't any of them stop us? They were so close in that street. Why didn't they say anything? Why did they just stare at me? Didn't they realize?

We were leaving the city behind now, already out of the nightmare of a one-way system. We started hitting the open roads, and I felt the car speed up. I glanced at the speed dial. It was hitting a hundred.

I felt a familiar lurch in my stomach. Speed was my thing. But not now... now it was unwelcomed.

I curled up on the seat, drawing my knees up to my chest, leaning my head against the cool window. My eyes were dropping, and my body was begging for the release of sleep, but I didn't want to even think about what would happen if I allowed myself to drop off.

Holding back the tears, I slowly, mechanically, began analysing my situation as my father had taught me to do.

I had just witnessed the mass murder of thirty men in the centre of London. I had been kidnapped by six unnaturally fast and strong men who did not seem to

want to kill me - but only at the orders of this jerk, Kaspar. A jerk they seemed to answer to. I did not know where the hell I was going, who the hell these people were, and what the hell was going to happen. Or how long it would take to report my disappearance.

My conclusion?

Hopeless...

It was almost laughable when compared to the past few years of my life. This was just the cherry on the icing... the icing that had already turned the cake sickly...

Silently I began to contemplate jumping from the door but just as a plan started to form there was a click as Kaspar turned the central locking on.

I watched as we left the city I loved behind, joining the deserted M25. The scenery gradually changed to suburbia and eventually sprawling fields, dotted with the occasional town or village. The signs we passed read Kent and I began to wonder whether they might

be heading to the port at Dover to maybe escape to France.

I sighed, swallowing back a fresh wave of tears and fear.

I knew what I had left behind. The question was, what was I going to?

+++

Chapter 3

# Dinner With A Vampire. Did I Mention I'm Vegetarian? (3)

Dinner With A Vampire. Did I Mention I'm Vegetarian? (Chapter 3)

*Next chapter. Starts to get a little more interesting in this one, but you will have to read on to find out what I'm on about =)*

*Also, thanks to everyone who read and rated last couple of chapters, it really is appreciated.*

*Canse12*

*=D*

*x*

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*Two hours stuck in a car with three deranged killers is not my idea of fun.*

*I couldn't sleep, for fear of what would happen. I couldn't talk because Mr. Charming-went-out-the-window constantly reminded me that I was at his mercy and should therefore should keep my trap shut. I couldn't even look out the window, because it was dark.*

*So instead I had to listen to an argument about Amber Von Hefner has huge tits and is a total killer in bed?"*

*The sun was beginning to rise, and I glanced at my watch: a four week early birthday present from my father. He had told me that my punctuality was atrocious, so I might as well have it now.*

*My thoughts wondered... my father. What was he going to think when he found out what had happened to me? And mother? And what about Lily, my little sister? She was just thirteen... she should not have to deal with*

*this. And Ruby? Ruby who would have to witness the horror we had left behind.*

*And the one crucial thought I had.*

*What would these strange killers do? Hold me to ransom? Silence me?*

*It didn't even bear thinking about.*

*Looking back at my watch I realized it was half-past four in the morning. The sun would rise soon. A few minutes later the first glimmers of light could be seen.*

*The fields were falling away, giving way to thick, dense forest. The road was becoming more winding and fewer and fewer cars were passing by. The sun was fully up now, sunrise turning to dawn. We stayed on the forest road, all the time climbing up and up.*

*The road swept sharply around to the left and suddenly we had passed through a large gatehouse. Huge, intricate iron-wrought gates were swung open,*

*the gothic arched windows guarded by gruesome gargoyles.*

*As we passed, I could have sworn I saw several faces peering from the windows... but before I could take a second glance we were already enclosed by the forest again.*

*The trees began thinning out, before sunshine abruptly broke through the needles of the many pines. A little further on, they gave way to leafy blooms and...*

*I gasped, hardly able to hold in my astonishment.*

*Because before us, surrounded by a vast expanse of lawn was a darkly beautiful mansion, so large the forest seemed to quail at its presence. Tall gothic spires jutted up from the pale stone, hundreds upon hundred of arched windows lining the three floors. A balcony jutted from the centre, help up by pillars that the entrance. In the distance I could see a garage and stables, early morning light dancing off lily pads floating on the lake at the foot of the grounds. The whole area was enclosed by trees of every shape and*

*size before they gave way to the pines that made up the forest - all I could see for miles. Sheltering the mansion behind was a steep hill, coated in forest too, streams running down into the lake.*

*We swept around the sandy drive, rounding a fountain and stopping outside the impressive entrance.*

*"So... where's the drawbridge?" I asked lightheartedly. Nobody answered.*

*Instead of a drawbridge, wide steps led up to a set of marble double doors, which in turn were covered by the stone balcony.*

*Somebody from the other car flung open my door, and grabbed me roughly by the shoulders, yanking me off the seat.*

*"Hey!" I exclaimed. He kept pulling, but I shrugged him off and got out myself.*

*"I am perfectly capable of walking myself, thank you," I said bluntly. He just shrugged his shoulders, and*

*walked off. Kaspar flicked the keys at a valet, and, wait... a valet? My eyes followed the man, dressed in silver and emerald who jumped into one of the cars and started it, heading towards the garages.*

*I tore my eyes away as Kaspar grabbed my wrist and darted up the steps, everybody followed behind. The double doors swung inward, seemingly of their own accord. The group strolled through.*

*My mouth was wide as we entered the hallway.... entrance hall. A grand staircase circled the wall, made entirely of the purest white marble. It led up to a large balcony and many more doors. Directly in front of me were a set of double doors, identical to the ones I had just passed through.*

*Under the stairs was a corridor, disappearing into darkness. But we were headed for a smaller door to my left. We passed a butler, who bowed.*

*"Your Highnesses. Lords. Sir... and Madam," he added, clearly surprised at my appearance. I eyed him*

*cautiously, unsure if what I had heard him just say was correct.*

*Cain stopped and muttered a few words to him, to which he bowed. Kaspar, unaffected pulled me through the smaller door, slamming it shut as soon as everyone was through.*

*I could feel my heart in my mouth, and every beat seemed to be as loud as thunder. The group were throwing their jackets off, flinging them onto the backs of plump furniture and turning to me, one by one. Silently I did the same. I was just pulling my first arm out when Kaspar darted over and reached into my inside pocket. He pulled out my phone, tossing it in the air and catching it again.*

*"I'll keep that." He smirked. Then casually, he pressed unlock and began searching through. "I wonder what could be on here?"*

*"Don't you dare!" I said, shrieking, making a lunge for the phone as he held it in his palm. He side-stepped me, letting me stumble a few paces forward.*

*"Why, something to hide?" he sneered. His fingers darted over the keyboard. "Dirty messages from your boyfriend perhaps?"*

*"Shut up! I don't even have a boyfriend!" I dived at him, making a second attempt at grabbing it back. But he held it out of my reach.*

*"Give it back!" I yelled, jumping, trying to snatch it from his hand.*

*"Joel. Who's this then?" He sniggered.*

*"Don't"-*

*Chuckling, he began reading, mocking a ridiculously high-pitched voice.*

*"Hey, I was just wondering if we could meet up sometime? Just you and me. We need to talk about what I did. I swear I won't cheat again. I miss you babe. Text back, Joel xxx."*

*He was smirking now, clearly enjoying himself. I scowled at him.*

*"Touched a nerve, did I?"*

*"Oh fuck off," I whispered, not intending for him to hear.*

*"Happily, girly, happily."*

*"Kaspar," Fabian suddenly hissed. He was glaring at Kaspar, his eyes silently furious. They seemed to have a silent conversation for a minute, before Kaspar tossed the phone at Fabian, who caught it, slipping it into his pocket. He walked forward, offering to take my coat.*

*"Sorry about that," he whispered in my ear.*

*I smiled my appreciation. Kaspar leant against the sofa drumming his fingers, waiting impatiently.*

*"Okay, so here is the deal girly... you saw too much. So you can become one of us or stay here forever."*

*I almost felt like laughing at such a preposition.*

*"I'm not a killer."*

*Kaspar shrugged his shoulders. "Then you will stay here until you agree to do so. And don't get your hopes up of rescue... nobody human can enter here without us knowing."*

*I frowned. "Human?"*

*"Yes. Human. How old do you think I am?"*

*It seemed irrelevant but I answered anyway. "About nineteen?"*

*They turned to each other suddenly, chuckling. But this time they seemed to decide on something and Kaspar uttered a number that would change my life.*

*"Wrong. I'm one hundred and ninety-seven."*

*I recoiled. "What?" I breathed.*

*Kaspar smiled his horrific smirk, revealing what in the dark had looked to be incisors, but were in fact long, white, pointed, fangs.*

*"Girly, we're vampires."*

+++

Chapter 4

# Dinner With A Vampire. Did I Mention I'm Vegetarian? (4)

Dinner With A Vampire. Did I Mention I'm Vegetarian? (Chapter 4)

"W... What?"

Okay, either this was some sick joke, or I was dreaming. No. Dreaming is far too idyllic a word.

It was a nightmare.

Fabian grimly nodded, his face more than serious.

"Is this some sick joke or something? 'Cos if it is, I swear"-

"It's not a joke Violet," said one of the boys whose name I didn't know. He was tall, and had short fiery red hair and dark brown eyes.

"Okay, let me get this right. You want me to cover up for you, even though you are cold-blooded murderers, and just slaughtered thirty men right in front of my eyes. You have taken me hostage, and now you are telling me you are vampires, and that I have to become one too." I let out a disgusted laugh. "Slight loophole there. Vampires. Don't. Exist."

Right?

Before I could say another word, I was flying through the air, coming to a splintering halt against the wall. I let out a moan as my spine felt like it was shattering against the whitewash walls. Kaspar was pressed up against me, his hands either side of my head. I shrank back as far as I could. I winced as my back arched. That was going to hurt in the morning.

His lips brushed against my neck, gently running up and down. I felt his icy breath, his heaving chest, his strength. I felt his seductive gaze, his power, his hunger.

I felt his dead heart.

I was totally helpless. And I knew it. He was built to kill. And I really wasn't.

His razor sharp teeth traced the line of my throbbing vein, before gently piercing my skin. I gritted my teeth, taking the pain, but still a wince escaped my lips. It hurt. But seconds later, he drew back, his body still pressed against mine, stopping my escape. He looked me straight in the eyes, and my breath caught.

His eyes were stunning. They were a dark emerald, the colour of only the purest jewels, standing out against the whites of his eyes like the moon does the night sky. You did not fall into them, more become mesmerized by them.

True beauty, nature's finest, darkest creature.

"Listen carefully. I am fucking vampire royalty, girly, and you will do what I want. So be careful what you say, because you never know when your darkest nightmares will come true." He pulled away, and backed off. I stood there stunned, unable to move for a full minute. I looked at each and every one of them.

They were not lying. They were not murderers, they were predators.

Slowly I recovered, and my hand scrabbled behind me, searching for the door handle. I found it and pulled the door open, falling out of the room. I slammed it shut behind me, and leant against the marble wall of the entrance hall. I doubled over, hands on my knees, mind overloading. It was too much. I felt my neck. To my horror, running down my neck was a single drop of blood. I drew my finger back, staring at it in horror.

They really were vampires.

Something clicked in my mind, and everything slotted into place. They wanted me to make a decision I was not prepared to make. I would not make. I had to get out of here.

I sprinted towards the doors, thanking the heavens the butler had gone.

I had to run, and I had to run now.

**********

"You shouldn't have done that man." Fabian said.

"Yeh, I know." I sighed, throwing myself down on the sofa. "But she wouldn't have got it otherwise. Besides, its just some human girl, and since when did we care about mortals?"

"Since you became heir Kaspar." Cain said. The other guys fell silent. They knew that nobody mentioned that but me.

"Shut up Cain!" I yelled, and chucked a cushion at him. He ducked, and it missed. Instead it flew straight into Charlie. It hit him with such force that he fell to the floor, all 6'5" of him.

"Just pointing out the facts big brother." Cain sniggered from his chair. I rolled my eyes at him.

Charlie straightened up, his perfectly gelled blonde hair a mess. "Man, Kaspar, keep your temper under control!" He threw the cushion back, but it never made the ground. Instead, a white, scarred hand had snatched it from the air. I jumped up, turning to face the new arrival.

"Father," me and Cain both chorused.

The words "Your Majesty," echoed four times from the other side of the room.

"She has run." He stated simply. His youthful, but wise face was full of disappointment, and I knew he would want an explanation later.

"Who?" Cain asked. What an idiot.

"Violet." Father answered. Cain glanced at me, and without another word, the six of us sprinted out the room, leaving my father behind, his bitter face hiding the anger I knew he felt.

**********

I had absolutely no idea where I was going. But hey, that didn't matter. I was getting out of here!

I had sprinted across the gardens, down the lawn, and around the pond, stopping only to take a second look at a goldfish I could have sworn was the size of a small dolphin. But now I was full on pelting it through the forest, skirting the edge of the pond. Soon I had left the main grounds behind. I leapt over fallen trees and roots, trying to clear my head.

So vampires existed.

Twenty-four hours ago and I would have laughed at that. But now, the word sent fear stabbing through my heart. That word meant hurt, pain, imprisonment. It just did not make sense. Vampires are things in stories that are meant to frighten children. Vampires are things meant to scare people shitless in horror films. Vampires are things girls drooled over. They aren't meant to be real.

I mean, how can people not know about this? How can six vampires waltz into the middle of London, and feed on thirty men? How can someone not notice that? Well, yeh, I noticed that. But the government and stuff?

And Kaspar had mentioned him being royalty. What the heck was that about? What did that make him? Or Cain? Hang on, vampires had royalty?

I was so consumed in my thoughts that I did not notice that I had run right into a large clearing. In the centre was a lake, its dark depths shimmering in the early morning light. Around the edge was an earthy bank. It looked...oddly beautiful. Darkly beautiful.

Like vampires I thought. Something about the whole place screamed danger, but it looked so inviting. What I would give just to take a swim.

The wind blew through my hair, and the air turned cold. I turned just in time to see six vampires leaping from the woods. Bugger.

A guy with gelled blonde hair dived straight at me, and I backed away. Suddenly I was sent floundering backwards, and with a huge SPLASH! I fell into the water. The water was bitterly cold, and almost immediately my skin turned a faint shade of blue. It was deeper than I thought, a good ten metres at least. I swam to the surface, shivering already.

I broke through, gasping for breath. All six of them were standing on the shore, looking totally shocked. Oh shit, had my dress gone see-through or something?

"Wha"-

I barely had time to scream before I was dragged under once more. I thrashed about desperately,

trying to see why I was being pulled down. And then I saw it.

Wrapped around my stomach was a huge tentacle, all brown and yucky. I turned around, and came face-to-face with a giant squid.

Why couldn't my life just be normal?!?

It pulled me deeper, and I slowly felt it squeezing the air from my lungs. I panicked, and started attacking its tentacle. I realized it was not working, and gradually gave up. My mind started to fuzz up, my thoughts losing all clarity.

Hahaha, funny, funny dream I was having. Hehehe, oh yeah, it wasn't a dream. Oh dear. I was going to die. Haha, imagine how funny that would be: death by giant squid on my death certificate. Wait 'till Ruby saw that.

The squid squeezed my last breath from my lungs, and then let me go. I felt myself slowly drifting to the bottom. So this was death. Peace at last.

Something white flashed in the corner of my eye. Oh, how cliché death was. A white light. Haha. How very original.

But it wasn't a light. It was a very pale body. Kaspar's very pale body.

If I had any breath left, it would have caught.

His stomach was muscled and toned, and his white skin reflected the light in ways I did not think possible. His dark hair fell over his face, covering his beautiful eyes. He was even more graceful in the water, looking just at home under the surface as he was above.

He swam towards me, and I felt my eyelids flutter, as I fought to stay conscious. Seconds later I felt myself being lifted. His strong arms pulled me through the water as though I was as light as a feather. I took one last look at him, before my eyes fluttered shut.

Kidnapped by a vampire, death by squid. Oh the irony.

- - - - - - - - - - - - - -

"Violet, Violet! Wake the hell up!" Somebody slapped my face. I abruptly came back to consciousness. Talk about being rudely awakened.

Somebody slapped my face again, harder this time. I coughed and spluttered, as the water left my lungs, air flooding in.

A third slap came my way, and this one hurt.

"Ouch! OUCH! What was that for, I'm fucking awake!?" I gasped, gulping mouthfuls of air.

"Just making sure," an arrogant voice said. I sat up. Great. It had to be him didn't it? I think dying would have been better than dealing with him.

"Oh, Kaspar, my hero," I said sarcastically.

"And yeh, you are the damsel in distress." He said back, equally as sarcastic.

"That's all the thanks you are getting, so I suggest you take it." I said. He shrugged his shoulders.

"The important thing is you're alive!" Fabian said. He offered me a hand, and I got to my feet.

"Yayyy," I muttered, as he pulled me up. Fabian linked his arm with mine, and we walked off. Guessing they weren't taking any more chances. The others followed.

"Why do you have a bloody giant squid in your lake?" I asked. I was genuinely curious.

"Kaspar and Cain's house. And why not?" Fabian replied.

"Touché." I smiled. Perhaps it wouldn't be too bad being kidnapped if this guy was around.

"Bloody hell, your freezing." Fabian exclaimed, as I let out an involuntary shiver. I looked at myself. He was right. My once favourite dress now hung limp against my frame, covering like, nothing. Stupid slut dress. My arms were purple, and my feet were sore from walking bare foot. Fabian took off his leather jacket and slung it around my shoulders.

"Thanks." I said. "Its not leather is it, its just I'm"-

"Vegetarian?" he cut in. "Its fake don't worry."

How did he know that? Oh well, at least it was fake. Never did agree with leather. I mean, its one thing killing a cow for food, but for clothes? Well- I was preaching again. Shut up mind.

"Ah, is girly cold?" Kaspar sneered, in his customary way.

"Its Violet. V-I-O-L-E-T."

"Yeh, yeh, I know, but as long as you are my hostage, its girly." He flashed me an earth shattering smile, not that it was designed to be.

"You are so going to regret this. My dad is a powerful man." I said boldly.

"Quit with the damsel stuff, it really doesn't suit you," Kaspar said. "And besides, I would bet my inheritance that my daddy could beat the crap out of your daddy," he mocked. "Who is you daddy anyway, some businessman?"

"No, he is Michael Lee, the Secretary of State for Defence." I said.

All six exchanged quick glances.

"Shit!" Kaspar grunted.

Chapter 5

# Dinner With A Vampire. Did I Mention I'm Vegetarian? (5)

Dinner With A Vampire. Did I Mention I'm Vegetarian? (Chapter 5)

It really is quite a peculiar feeling being swept up into a vampire's arms.

"What the hell are you doing?" I screamed, as Kaspar carried me bridal style, racing through the trees.

"Getting myself out of this shit!" He yelled back.

"Oh well, do you think you could get yourself out of this shit without carrying me?" I said, trying to be polite. I didn't get a reply.

"I'll take that as a no." Still no reply.

We raced across the lawns. I was getting way too used to this. Kaspar let me down on the steps, grabbed my wrist, and hauled me through the huge double doors.

"This is Lyla, my sister," he murmured, gesturing to an unbelievably pretty girl stood just inside the doors. She smiled. Her features were elfin like, and she shared the same stunning eyes as her brothers. She had short, cropped, pinkie-purple hair. It flicked out, and there were long wispy bits falling to her shoulders. She was quite tall, but petite at the same time.

Without any explanation, I was handed over to her. She took my hand and pulled me up the stairs. She seemed to be anxious to get away, tugging at my arm impatiently. As we reached the top, I looked back down. All six boys were looking up at us, looking... scared? Suddenly they all turned, standing up straight. I followed their gaze. Stood outside the large door was a man. A scary looking man. His face was etched with scars, although it did not ruin his handsome, youthful looks. He had steely grey hair,

and a little stubble grew on his perfectly sculpted chin. He was tall, but stockily built. He had empty grey, heartless eyes that showed no emotion. He wore a black suit and an equally dark look on his face. There was absolutely no doubt about it. He was a vampire.

Lyla suddenly stood up straight, and said; "Father." Kaspar and Cain did the same, and I could see the fear of this man in their eyes. This man that was their father.

Father?

At almost the same time, Fabian and the other guys bowed, and said; "Your Majesty."

Your Majesty?

But that must mean, he was the king? But that would make Kaspar and Cain princes, and Lyla a princess!

So they were royalty?!

I looked down to the scene below. I met Kaspar's eyes, and for a second, a brief, brief moment, I thought I saw something there. Pity? Remorse? But

then his face clouded over, and his eyes became the same cold, callous pits as his father's. And once more I was dragged away from a scene I never wanted to see.

- - - - - - - - - - - - - -

"This is your room," Lyla said, smiling. Hmmm, pretty nice. It was quite large, with a deep purple carpet. The mahogany four-poster bed was set at an angle, with large purple drapes falling to the floor. French doors led out onto a small balcony. Purple and white voiles covered the doors. Beside it were several gothic windows. But the most impressive part of the room was the black baby grand piano in the corner.

"I figured purple was your colour, so..." Lyla trailed off in her enchanting voice. She pointed towards a door. "That's the wardrobe over there. We'll get your stuff over here in a couple of days, but 'till then, you can have some of my clothes. Oh, and bathroom is just down the corridor. Kaspar wouldn't let you have an en-suite, thought you were going to start cutting or something." She smiled, again. I smiled back

gratefully. I really needed to get out of this dress. Out of the blue, my stomach gave an involuntary growl.

"Oh my gosh, sorry, you must be starving! We're kinda not used to having humans around," she said apologetically. "I'll get something brought up for you. Not fussy are you?" She asked.

I shook my head. "As long as its not blood." I laughed nervously.

" 'Course not. Oh, and your vegetarian right?" she replied. I nodded. How did she know I was vegetarian? I was about to ask, but when I looked towards the door, she had already gone.

I walked over to the French doors. I tried the handle, fiddling about for a minute. No surprise, it was locked. Guess they weren't taking any chances. I leaned my head against the cool glass. I felt the huge barricades I had thrown up around myself beginning to crumble. I knew I could not be strong much longer. It was too much. Far too much.

Stuff like this is not meant to happen.

Slowly, very slowly, I felt my eyes begin to sting as tears pricked them.

Never again would I see anyone I loved.

Never again would I be free.

Never again could I take a breath of air knowing I was not a prisoner.

Never again would my life be, well, normal.

There was a brief knock on the door. I walked over, and opened the door. Sat on the floor was a tray, a bowl of cereal and a glass of juice balanced on top. Well, I guess vampires did not know how to make a fry-up.

I picked up the tray and went to sit on the bed. Halfway there I noticed a piece of paper tucked under the glass. I put the tray to one side, and unfolded the note. It was written in fancy, and almost illegible script. It read:

Violet,

You are free to roam the house whenever you please, but do not go into the grounds. It will not be good if

you do. Also, avoid my father at all costs, but if you do come across him, curtsey and say, "Your Majesty." Please, please put your pride aside and do this. If you do need anything, ask one of the staff where my room is, and I will do what I can. Good luck,

HRH Lyla

AND VIOLET, IF ANYONE OF US IS HUNGRY, GET THE HELL OUT OF THERE! FAST.

Do you know that feeling, when it feels like the whole world has just fallen upon your shoulders, and everything is too much to bare? When there is no hope left, you have given up, and you know your life won't... can't ever be the same again? When you pretend that everything is okay, but as soon as you are alone, you scream, you cry, you want to die. That feeling you get when you lose someone or something you love? When you grieve for a death. When you grieve for lost love. When you grieve for what will never be again.

When you are so scared, because you do not know what is going to happen?

Well, I felt like that.

I dived back, burying my head in my pillow, and silently screamed into the cloth. Tears stung my eyes, but they did not fall. I never cried. And I would not now.

I heard a gentle tapping on the window and looked up. Falling against the glass were great sheets of rain. They sliced through the air, and great grey clouds rolled overhead, casting the estate into shadow. The bleak landscape looked far more hostile than usual, or maybe it was the fact that I now knew what stalked those dark forests.

As I looked, the sky suddenly lit up. For a moment, everything turned an electric blue, to match the lightning now dazzling the stormy sky. I walked towards the window, mesmerized.

A thunderstorm. How apt. Trapped inside a vampires mansion, surrounded by ancient forests, with no hope of escape, whilst looking through a gothic window upon the miserable, frightening weather. How cliché.

I curled up on the windowsill, and sure enough, listened as the first thunder rumbled through the sky. The windows shook, the floor moved. I leant my head against the cool window once more. A storm. Truly an architect of anarchy.

No. I would not cry for a bunch of messed up vampires. Never.

Chapter 6

# Dinner With A Vampire. Did I Mention I'm Vegetarian? (6)

Dinner with a vampire. Did I mention I'm vegetarian? (Chapter 6)

I must have fallen asleep, for many hours later, I woke up. For a moment my head rushed as I glanced around. Where was I?

I felt a sharp pain in my wrist and looked down. All across my right hand wrist were deep lacerations, long dried blood caked up the length of my arm.

The horrific scene in Trafalgar Square.

Being dragged through the dark streets of London, a mysteriously handsome guy pulling me by the wrists.

A voice hissing in my ear. "Too slow." Being swept up into a strong man's arms. Hours later, finding out the terrible truth.

Sharp teeth running across my neck. Blood dripping.

Running. Falling into the lake, drowning, dying. Losing hope. Bright white pulling me back to the surface. Kaspar...

Everything that had happened in the last forty-eight hours flooded back to me, memories flashing before my eyes faster than I thought possible. I shook my head, trying to rid my head of the past. I studied the clock on my bedside table. It read 7:23am. But that must mean it was the next day? The second of August. I had slept for almost twenty-four hours. Wow. I must have really zonked out.

I jumped down from the windowsill, where I had fallen asleep. My joints clicked, protesting against this sudden movement. I stretched, trying to ease out the stiffness in my muscles. I looked down at the floor, not sure what to do with myself.

I glimpsed Lyla's note, strewn across the carpet. I read it through once more, taking in the information properly this time. Last time my emotions just could not cope with any of it. She had mentioned being free to roam the house. Well, its decided then. If this really was going to be my new, *gulp* home, I might as well know my way around. Yes. Today I would go exploring.

But first, I needed a shower. I placed the note safely under the clock, and walked over towards the wardrobe. I pulled open the door, and gasped. Walk-in-wardrobe didn't cover it. More like my own personal shopping centre (mall, sorry, I know, being really, really English there!). Running down the left hand wall were long racks, empty save for a couple of outfits. Along the right were more racks, but these were broken up my three doors. I pulled open the nearest, and peeked in. It was reasonably small, but it contained a washbasin, as well a bathroom mirror. A bar of soap, toothbrush and toothpaste were placed beside the basin, towels neatly folded and hung from a towel rack. I closed the door, and moved onto the next.

I noticed this one had a large, secure lock attached. I turned the handle, half expecting it to not open. But to my surprise, it did. The room was exactly the same size, except this one contained several drawers, and jewellery stands. In the corner was yet another mirror, and below it, a small bag of make up. I slid one of the drawers open. It was empty, although it contained space to store rings and bracelets. So that explained the lock.

As I opened the third door, I was blinded, light after light clicking on. It took a moment for my eyes to re-focus.

Blimey. It was a full on dressing room. All four walls were covered in full length mirrors, and spotlights lit the room from every angle. I stepped in, turning in amazement. It was then that it took a look at myself in the mirror.

Wow, was I not a pretty sight.

My hair looked as though electricity had been passed through it, and I could swear there were bits of twig tangled in there. My clip in extensions were slipping out, tugging at my greasy strands of hair. The rest of

me did not look any better. There were countless cuts and grazes dotted about my body and mud was smeared across my face, mingled in with my smudged make up. My foundation even looked orange around the edges, although that may have just been blood. Dried blood caked to my arms, and my dress hung lifeless around my frame, fraying at the edges, torn in places I really wish it wasn't. My feet were brown and muddy, and I realised I must stink. But it was my eyes that looked the most pitiful. Usually bright and lively, they now looked old and weary, as though they had seen a hundred years of suffering, not two days. I sighed.

Turning to leave, something caught my eye. Almost invisible, were two tiny marks, whiter and glossier than the rest of my skin. They were quite close to each other, and lay right over my vein. I knew what had left those marks. Kaspar's fangs.

I suppressed a shiver, and walked out. I carefully closed the door behind me. I was now at the end of the wardrobe, and there were now countless

drawers, hat boxes, coat stands, and the like to replace the racks.

This was like a fairytale, except I am pretty sure Cinderella's walk-in-wardrobe came with a full set of ball gowns. And nicer hosts.

I randomly pulled open a drawer, and out of sheer luck, found several sets of brand new underwear, the tags still attached. The bras were even the right size, a 34B. Lyla was good, I have to admit.

I grabbed a matching set, and walked down to the other end. I examined the clothes, deciding on which to wear.

There were roughly two sets, both exactly my style. This Lyla girl had good taste, considering they were her clothes. I picked a pair of black faded skinnies out, as well as a Muse band tee-shirt. I looked down at the shoe rack. There were two pairs of converse, one high cut, one low. A pair of checked Vans, a pair of dolly shoes, and some flip-flops. I checked the sizes of the converse.

Damn, they were a 7. (British shoe sizes). Size too big, 'cos I was only a 6. The Vans were the same, and so were the dolly shoes. I didn't fancy the flip-flops, so I took my chances with the dolly shoes. They looked small anyway. They had a little black bow on each shoe, and pink skulls printed all over. They'll do, I thought. I grabbed the towels from the washroom, and headed out.

As I left my room, I realised I had no idea where the bathroom actually was. Lyla had said it was down the corridor, but which way? I played eeny, meeny, miny, moo in my head, and decided to go right. I would just have to try every room, and hope to death no one was in there.

Most of the rooms I came across were empty, kept for guests I presume. But I did make a few interesting discoveries. A few doors down from my room, was a large bedroom, furnished similarly to mine, except it looked lived in. The carpet was grey, and there were clothes strewn across the carpet, and a black bass guitar on the bed. On the floor was a shirt I recognized as Fabian's.

So he lived here then? I quickly closed the door, feeling as though I was intruding. I opened many other doors, finding similar rooms to Fabian's. Three others to be exact. I then came across another door. There was no doubt whose room this was.

Below a toxic waste symbol, were the words, 'Cain's room, keep out!' Better not go in there. Next to this was another room, which totally threw me. Inside it was totally pink, and looked like it was furnished for a little girl, with teddies (torn up) everywhere, and well played with dolls lying in their prams. I got out of there quick. It creeped me out.

At the very end of the corridor was what I assumed was Lyla's room. It was all white, back and pink, and there seemed to be clothes everywhere. Not untidy everywhere, just sheer quantity everywhere. There were posters of various emo bands on the walls, as well as some hot guys I didn't recognise. The corridor now turned to the left, and I was pretty sure the bathroom wasn't down there. I turned back and started on the doors the other side of my room. I tried the one right next to mine on the left, and

gasped as the door swung open. It was by far the grandest, largest room. An all black four poster dominated the room, and there was a huge fireplace in the centre of the wall, a humongous painting of a man and a lady hung above. Opposite were French doors similar to those in my room, except that these led out onto a huge balcony. I recognised this as the balcony that covered the entrance. The room itself was wood panelled, but everything else was black. In the corner was an impressive black and bright green electric guitar. A fender. Next to it was an acoustic, also black.

I had a good idea whose room this was, and it gave me no further desire to stay. I quickly backed out and closed the door. I heard footsteps. I panicked and dived for the door opposite. I threw myself in, and slammed the door shut. Oh, finally, the bathroom.

I turned around, fumbled about, and managed to turn the lock. I heard someone pass by, unusually walking at a human pace. I threw my stuff on the floor, and walked over to the shower. The whole room was almost entirely made out of red marble,

even the bath. I turned the water on, and waited for it to warm up.

I stripped down, and stepped in. Now this was nice. The water soothed my sore muscles, and washed all the muck off. I reached for some of the bottles, randomly grabbing one. I took a quick look, and seeing it was shampoo lathered it on my hair, unclipping my purple extensions as I did.

I took my time, letting the water wash over me. I grabbed a towel, dried myself, and got dressed. The tee shirt fitted perfectly, not too baggy, not too clingy. The jeans were a different story. They fit fine around the waist, but they were too long. They looked more like straight legs than skinnies. I sighed. Better than nothing. I wrapped my hair in another towel, and darted back to my room. I searched the cupboards, and eventually found a hairdryer and straighteners. I fiddled around with my hair for a bit, letting my hair fall straight, and my fringe fall over my eyes. Next, I grabbed the make up from the wash room, and searched through the bag. Foundation, blush, lip-gloss, eye shadow. Why would a vampire even need

this stuff? Finally I found what I was looking for. Eyeliner and mascara.

I quickly applied thick eyeliner, and mascara. A question popped into my head.

Why was I even bothering? I mean, I could go down looking like some crazy lady and nobody would care. So why?

I didn't know the answer, so I threw the question from my head. I slipped on the dolly shoes, and walked out. I took my chances, and turned left. To my relief I found the main marble staircase. I glanced at the banister, daring myself to. To do what you ask?

I jumped up onto the banister, and sat on it. I let go, and slid all the way down, laughing as I did. I slid right off the end, and went skidding across the floor. I managed to get my balance, and went skipping towards the living room. If I scratched their pretty staircase, well then, bonus!

I skipped all the way into the living room, and then stopped, unsure of where to go. Then I noticed a door opposite. I went through it, and found myself in

another corridor. There were many doors on the right, but up ahead was a large archway, and... Hallelujah! A kitchen! I hadn't eaten in days, and being the idiot I am, hadn't touched my cereal. I skipped down the corridor, right into the kitchen. I spotted Fabian sat on a bar stool, next to a large breakfast bar. He was holding a glass, which contained something that looked suspiciously like blood.

"Morning." I sung, ignoring what he was holding. He looked up, and wolf whistled.

"Lookin' good. Lyla's?" He asked. "Yup," I replied.

"Suits you."

I ran the last few steps, turned, and hoisted myself up onto the breakfast bar.

"Make me food please." I demanded.

"Manners?"

"I said please." I pouted trying to look as innocent as possible. Not exactly easy. He chuckled and rolled his

eyes. He got up, and walked around to the all black and white kitchen.

"Like toast?" he asked.

"Got marmite?" I replied. He just chuckled again, and stuck some bread in the toaster. I watched him intently, fascinated by his fluid movements. He met my gaze. How can something manage to be that attractive?

"Hey, I know I am inhumanly hot, but you don't have to stare." He said, a huge smirk on his face. I blushed cherry tomato red.

"Sorry," I managed to say. "Don't worry, I'm used to it." He answered.

"So, you a Muse fan?" he asked.

"Love 'em." I said.

"Favourite song?" I thought for a moment, and then replied. "Knights of Cydonia. You?"

"Well I'm more of a Guns n' Roses fan myself, but if I had to choose, I'd say Megalomania."

"Psycho," I mouthed. He grinned, revealing his perfectly white teeth. And his fangs.

I caught sight of them, and it got me thinking. I knew nothing about vampires. And if I was going to be living with them, then surely I should know how they worked, right? I flushed red as a thought came to my mind.

"Fabian..."

"Violet?"

"Can I ask you something... about vampires?"

Chapter 7

# Dinner With A Vampire. Did I Mention I'm Vegetarian? (7)

Dinner With A Vampire. Did I Mention I'm Vegetarian? (Chapter 7)

For a second, a flicker of doubt crossed his face, but too soon, it was gone.

"Of course," he replied.

"If a... when a vampire, you know... feeds, do they... kill the person they are"-

-"Feeding off?" he finished. "It depends."

"On what?"

"How thirsty the vampire is." I nodded signalling my understanding. "A vampire takes as much as they

need to quench their thirst. Generally we don't take that much, but sometimes... you have to understand Violet, that we are a different species. It's no different from a lion killing an antelope. The antelope is it's prey. It just helps that neither the lion nor the antelope look or behave like one another..." he trailed off, bitterness in his voice. But his eyes were full of pleading, begging for me to understand.

I wordlessly nodded, letting that information absorb. It sent chills running down my spine, and I unwittingly let out a shiver. "How... how many have you killed?"

"About eighty. I... I lost count," he said, genuine remorse in his voice. I felt my eyes widen, and I leaned away from him slightly, shocked. That many? "Don't look at me like that, that is a pretty good track record considering I am two hundred and one." His blue eyes flashed darker for a moment, and I knew he was angry, but I didn't care.

"What about the others?" I managed to whisper, my voice hoarse as I fought back the horror.

"Kaspar, over a hundred. Lyla eighteen, and Cain twenty-eight, but he isn't fully fledged yet. I'm not sure about the other guys, and the King has probably killed thousands," he said, calming down.

I nodded again, slowly finding my voice. Why did it not surprise me Kaspar had killed so many? "Why has Lyla killed so few?" I asked, curious.

"That is for her to tell, not me," he said sharply. I sensed there was far more to that story. Far more.

"Okay, so... what do you mean Cain isn't fully fledged yet?" It sounded like some bird watchers language.

"Well, he isn't eighteen yet, so he isn't as thirsty." He smiled, seeing my totally confused face. The dark moment of our conversation seemed to have passed.

"A vampire born into vampirism ages normally until he or she is eighteen. As in each year, they look a year older. They are not fully-grown yet, and there powers are slightly weaker. So Cain is actually younger than you are, he is sixteen. However when they reach eighteen, they become full-grown vampires. Now for every hundred years they live, they only look as

though they have aged one year. Hence, why Kaspar and I only look nineteen, twenty-ish, but are in fact two hundred. Get it?

"Yes. So vampires aren't actually immortal?" I asked, becoming more and more interested.

"Theoretically, no. But we age so slowly, we practically are. Oldest vampire is 500,000 years old, and he is still going strong."

"Wow," I breathed. A thousand questions popped into my mind, as I became more and more interested. He slid a plate of toast across the breakfast bar, and I took a piece, hungrily scoffing it down.

"Can you go out in sunlight?"

"Yes, but just at risk of getting really, really, bad sunburn. So pushing me outside won't kill me if you are thinking about it." He said, pulling funny faces, making it look as though he was melting.

I giggled.

"And if you are thinking of bumping me off, feeding me garlic bread will just make my breath smell,

buying me a necklace with a cross on it will just make me look religious, and giving me a shower in holy water will make me smell nice." I nearly choked on my piece of toast, as I burst out laughing. He patted me on the back, and I slowly recovered.

"You humans, so frail," he said, shaking his head.

"Whatever bloodsucker. So how do you kill a vampire then?" I retorted.

"Push a stake through his heart, break and bite his neck, suck him dry, and then burn the remains. But you can leave out the stake," he explained, a wicked look in his eyes.

"Brutal." I said, between mouthfuls of the toast I was still munching.

"Can you turn into a bat?" I asked, trying to look serious.

"No." His lips quivered, and I could tell he was trying not to laugh.

"Can you cross running water?"

"Yes."

"Can you enter a house uninvited?"

"No."

"Why?" I asked, surprised.

"Because that is just rude." He said, and then burst into laughter, the joyous sound filling the whole room. I punched him playfully on the shoulder. I knew it wouldn't hurt him, but it gave me some satisfaction.

"Hey! And yes, you can be turned into a vampire, by being bitten by another vampire, and then drinking some of their blood, but most vampires are born that way these days, into vampire families. That answer your next question?"

I nodded, a little dumbfounded. "Vampires can read minds can't they?" I asked.

"Yes, and they are telepathic." He said matter of factly. At that moment, several blurs flew into the kitchen, and sat down on the stalls. I already knew what it was, I could feel the air around me turning bitterly cold as six vampires sat down around me.

"Morning," Lyla said brightly. "I hear that these rude so and so's haven't actually introduced themselves," she scolded, looking towards the three boys whose names I did not know. "That is Charlie," she nodded her head towards the fair-haired boy who had knocked me into the lake. He nodded his head in reply. "That's Felix." A boy with flaming red hair held his hand out, and I shook it. "And that is Declan." The last boy looked over the top of his magazine, and said "pleasure to meet." I was stunned to hear a thick Irish accent. It just didn't go with his jet black hair, only slightly darker than Kaspar's.

"And of course you know my idiot brothers, and Fabian." He mouth curled a little as she said the name Fabian.

I took in Cain for the first time. Now I looked at him, I realised he didn't have the same aged look as his siblings. He looked young, fresh, naïve. His hair was lighter than Kaspar's, nearer blonde than black. However, he shared the same eyes as both his brother and his sister. The beautiful, mesmerizing emerald eyes.

Kaspar, who was sat next to me, suddenly got up, and whizzed around to the fridge. Sheesh! Would it hurt them just to walk at a normal pace for once? I looked at the newspaper Kaspar had just been reading, now set down on the tabletop. It was the Daily Telegraph.

And then I saw it. What Kaspar had been reading. Dominating the front page was a huge black and white aerial photo of Trafalgar Square. Trafalgar Square littered in bodies.

My eyes widened, as I recognized the scene. That was what the vampires I was now sat next to had created. I looked closer, and saw police officers pushing back enraged crowds, away from the tape surrounding the scene. It was graphic, you could even see the blood that coated the square.

Plastered above it was the headline:

London's Bloodbath... Horrific mass murder in Trafalgar Square!

I realized I was standing but I didn't care. I gripped the breakfast bar tightly, fighting to stay on my feet. Slowly I began to read on:

In the early hours of yesterday morning, London awoke to the worst mass murder of this nature in British history, after thirty victims, all male, were found lying dead in Trafalgar Square.

All thirty victims, as yet unidentified, were found with broken necks, and serious flesh wounds, also to the neck. Nine of the victims had also been found to be drained of all blood, sparking controversy among the public.

The Metropolitan Police cordoned off the scene at approximately 3am on the 31st of August, after a shocked member of public rang the police. The victims were all pronounced dead upon arrival at the scene.

John Charles, head of the Metropolitan Police, said, "we are of course deeply shocked and moved by this horrific incident, and as the Metropolitan Police, we are determined to bring this obviously evil and very dangerous killer[s] to justice. We have our best forensic teams working at the scene, but we are appealing to witnesses who may have been in the

area between the hours of midnight and 2am on the 31st of August. Please come forward."

Miss Ruby Jones, who discovered the scene, said; "I went to the square looking for my friend, but I... I found this. I rang the police straight away, it was just too... too... horrible." Miss Jones is extremely traumatised and is being treated for shock at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital.

A high-heeled shoe has been found at the scene, and is being treated as evidence, although we were told it may belong to a young woman, believed to be at the scene during the incident. It is feared that she may have been taken by the murderer[s], although there are no official reports yet.

This gruesome murder is being compared to the infamous Kent Bloodsucker's incident, where three young women were found dead, and possibly raped near Tunbridge Wells two and a half years ago. All three had broken necks, and had been drained of blood via their necks. This sparked uproar among fanatics, who claimed it was the work of 'vampires'.

It is estimated that the square will be closed for up to two months, whilst forensic evidence is collected. A clean up operation must also take place, and due to the nature of the incident, the square will have to be totally cleaned and disinfected to remove any traces of blood. The fountains that have earned this incident its name, The London Bloodbath, will also have to be drained, as they are full of blood.

Police have said this may be the work of a gang active in the area within the last three months. If anyone has any information on this gang or the incident, they can either visit a local police station, or call a special hotline on 05603 826111. All identities remain anonymous.

By Phillip Bashford.

Salty tears ran down my cheeks, as I silently sobbed. It was... was too sickening. But it was the fact Ruby, my friend Ruby, had found the scene. She shouldn't have had to see that. She wasn't as strong as me. It would haunt her worse than it did me. It was for Ruby I cried. It was for the poor men I cried. They never stood a chance.

I looked up, and saw Kaspar stood silently behind me. I realized everyone had been watching me read. He held a glass of red liquid in his hand.

Blood.

Anger rose in me, the past two days catching up with me. I turned to face Kasper. I had bottled it up, but now it was going to explode. Tears of anger rolled down my face, smearing my make up, but I didn't care. I wanted to make them pay, but I knew I couldn't. I was just human, and at their mercy.

I placed two hands on his chest, and shoved him, as hard as I could. I put every ounce of strength I had into it, pouring every emotion into the thought of hurting him. To my total surprise he actually took a step back. He didn't fall. I didn't force him to move. He just let me push him. That just made more tears fall.

"YOU'RE SICK, YOU KNOW THAT? REALLY SICK!" I screamed at the top of my lungs.

I sprinted out the room, tears flowing unchecked now. The thought of those men, lying in a pool of

their own blood just kept bouncing around my mind, making my stomach turn, and bile rise in my throat. I ran until I found a bathroom, and it was my turn to be really sick.

**********

"Maybe it would have been easier to just kill her? Kaspar?" Felix thought.

"No, it wouldn't, and could you all butt out of my mind?" I thought back, practically shouting it, filling my mind with that one thought. I needed to think. Privately. Something about the look on her face just then had disturbed me, made me actually move when she pushed me. It was a feeling I thought I remembered, like a long forgotten emotion, something I had been plagued with years ago, but had lost. But what? It frustrated me, not knowing what was going to happen. I wasn't used to it. It was too complicated this time.

"I just meant, maybe it would be better for her, if she didn't, well... have to deal with us? Felix explained. I knew what he meant. That thought hadn't left my mind for the last twenty four hours.

"Shut up Felix, everyone deserves to live. She'll cope with it, she's strong," Declan argued, his Irish accent crystal clear even when we talked telepathically.

"She will have to cope with us, and all our... habits." I said, my usual wicked tone coming back into my voice. I could see Lyla shaking her head at the floor. She disapproved of me, and my ways.

"I think she will learn to accept us. Heck, I think eventually she might actually let us take blood from her. Probably slap us afterwards, but you know..." Fabian trailed off, mentally laughing at his last comment.

"You talked with her?" Lyla perked up, and for a second, her eyes turned a jealous shade of green. Don't Lyla... I thought, keeping that to myself.

"Yeh. She asked a lot of questions about us." Fabian replied.

"Oh," Lyla said aloud.

"Talking of blood"- I said, trying to change the subject, but Cain interrupted.

"This stuff is bloody good!" I noticed he was holding a glass of the blood from the fridge. His eyes were brighter and more vibrant than usual, telling me he had quenched his thirst. "No way is that blood donor stuff!" he finished.

"Its not..." I started, smirking.

"Kaspar James Vladimir Eztli Varn! Tell me you didn't!" Lyla thought, glaring at me.

I didn't reply, just smirked even more.

"I don't get it? Whose blood"- Charlie began.

"It's Violet's blood isn't it?!" Lyla said.

Chapter 8

# Dinner With A Vampire. Did I Mention I'm Vegetarian? (8)

Dinner With A Vampire. Did I Mention I'm Vegetarian? (Chapter 8)

I staggered out of the bathroom, shaken, my pride wounded. I had vowed to myself that I would never cry, not in front of them.

I thought I had forgotten how to cry. I thought I was stronger.

Four years. I had not cried in four years. Not since...

I shook my head. Don't even think about it I told myself. Dwelling on the past only makes the future seem bleaker.

I needed to get away from them. I had to escape from all the atrocities they had committed, lose myself in something. But what? And then it hit me. I would lose myself in this place. Man, it was big enough. I would just go exploring, like I had planned.

I walked in the opposite direction to the kitchen, and found myself back in the living room. I took the door back to the entrance hall, and stopped, choosing where to go. I took the stairs, deciding to start with the upper floors. I started with the corridor my bedroom was on, and went from there. My bedroom was surprisingly near the stairs, perhaps one of the nearest. Beyond the corridor I had already explored were an expanse of bedrooms, all empty, unlived in. I found two large rooms, more like apartments that actually looked like they were inhabited, but not recently.

I lost myself in the maze of corridors, amazed as I turned every corner and found some famous piece of artwork, or valuable sculpture. They had millions of pounds here, locked up in, well... stuff.

Despite the wealth, it wasn't a welcoming place. It was dark and gloomy, exactly what a young Victorian heroine would find in some gothic novel, whilst swooning over her Mr Darcy. Every hall had its dark place, perfect to be ambushed in, constantly reminding me of exactly who lived here. I gave a shudder as that thought passed my mind. Even the gothic stone windows let in little light. Okay, so maybe it would have helped if it was sunny.

I found another set of stairs and climbed them. Here I found yet more empty rooms, and if it is even possible, this floor was even gloomier! There were few windows, and the walls, unlike the floor below which were wood panelled, and even more different from the ground floor, which was entirely white marble, were painted a dark, bloody red.

Halfway around, I came across a large wooden door. All the way down were large claw marks, gouged out by I don't want to know what. The brass doorknob was faded, and smeared after hundreds of years of use. Something drew me to the door, inviting me to take a quick peek. I placed my hand on the doorknob,

and was about to turn it... But just as my skin brushed the metal, I felt something cold on the back of my neck. The hairs on the back of my neck immediately stood on end, and I knew I was not alone.

I stood perfectly still, too scared to move. My hand was paralyzed, unable to move from the doorknob. Something icy, icy cold was tickling my delicate skin, tantalizing the hairs. It felt like... like someone was breathing on me.

"Do not go in there." A hoarse voice rasped in my ear. It was ancient, tinted by time, but still it was deep, seductive, alluring me into becoming its next victim.

I jerked my head around, sure someone was there. But there was nothing. I wrenched my head around, looking for the source of the voice. Nothing.

I summoned my courage and spoke. "Who's there?"

"Someone you do not wish to anger," the voice taunted, behind me again. I could feel his, (for it was definitely a he) breath on the back of my neck again, and I stood there, petrified of this unknown danger.

"Now go, you frail creature, before you find things that you do not wish to see." His voice said with clear authority that I did not dare disobey. Wordlessly I scampered backwards, and sprinted away. I didn't know where I was going, I just kept running. I got more and more lost, but no way was I going near that door again. Eventually I stopped, doubled over, trying to catch my breath. I was in a brightly painted corridor, the walls white, and the doors less grand. All in all, it was quite plain. Servants quarters?

"'Scuse me miss, but are you okay?"

I jerked my head up, startled at this new voice. Hey, what can I say, I was totally spooked, and real jumpy.

"Oh, sorry, I didn't mean to scare 'ya." The voice said, in a heavy cockney accent. It came from a young girl, not much older than me by the looks of her, dressed in a plain black dress and maid's bonnet. She had a kind face, her mousy blonde hair framing her rosy cheeks. She would be quite stunning, if it was not for the scars of hard work that adorned her face.

"No, its fine, I'm... just a bit jumpy." I said.

"Oh, well," she said, sensing my unwillingness to explain. "You must be the human the Master Varns took with 'em from London. Violet, ain't it?" I nodded. "Well, I'm Annie," she said smiling, her rough voice taking on a sing-song tone. For a moment, I thought I saw something sharp and glinting in her mouth.

"Erm, do you work here?" I asked.

"Yup, I'm the scullery maid." She replied. They still had scullery maids? Sheesh, this was more and more like Jane Austen every minute.

"Well, I"- I said, struggling to find the words. I was still a bit shocked at the thought of scullery maids. And still spooked. "I got a bit lost, and I was wondering, maybe, you could, err, point me in the right direction to get back downstairs," I said, embarrassed. I wasn't used to asking for help, I was usually way too self sufficient for that. Too proud.

"'Corse. Long as you don't tell no one, you can take the servants stairs. There at the end of 'ere," she said pointing in the opposite direction from where I had come. "Just be careful you don't go too far down, 'cos you'll end up in the basement kitchens, and you don't

want that." With one last smile, she hurried off, but before she could get too far, I called her name.

"Annie!" She stopped and turned.

"Yes miss?" she asked dutifully.

"Are... are you human?" I asked, trying not to offend her. It didn't seem to though.

"Nah, if I was, they would have bitten 'me head off by now." She smiled, and revealed her fangs, glistening and white. It was then that I saw her true beauty. Her brown eyes swirled with gold, changing colour every so often according to her mood. Her skin was pale, although it looked red, and chapped, like it had been burnt. She had a perfect figure, her curves hidden beneath the lifeless material of her uniform. You could dress beauty down, but you could never truly hide it. She was a vampire.

"Oh, well thanks for your help," I said, cautiously returning her smile.

"Pleased to be of service miss." With that, she scurried off, quickly disappearing into the darkness of the upper floor. I walked further into the servant's

quarters. I found a spiral staircase, made of stone, twisting its way down. As I followed it down, I thought about Annie. Fabian had said most vampires were born into vampire families, which from what I had heard, were all pretty rich. So what was a vampire as pretty as her doing in the service of another family? I made a note to ask her next time I saw her, tactfully of course. I came to a door, but ignored it, carrying on down. I came to another, and opened it.

I didn't recognise where I was, but I'm guessing it was somewhere in the corridor that came from under the stairs. I opened the nearest door, and gasped.

They had a frickin' indoor pool! Olympic size pool, complete with dive board. And a jacuzzi! I shut the door, excited about exploring now. I quickly twisted around, and roughly turned the handle of the door opposite. This was a games room. A huge games room, roughly the same size as the Olympic pool room. It had everything. Playstation 3, Xbox 360, Nintendo Wii, snooker and pool table, dance

machine, a television that must be like a hundred inches wide, surround sound, well, everything. The walls were painted black, and the windows were covered with black blinds. Man, you would get square eyes in there.

I skipped around like a little child, opening every door I came to, and excitedly peeking in. I quickly figured that this was like one big corridor, with lots of very big rooms. They had everything. Study, parlour, another living room, drawing room, library, complete with more books than my local library stocked, a computer room, bathroom after bathroom, music room, billiards room, the list goes on and I wasn't even halfway down the corridor yet!

What must be halfway, I came across a door much bigger than the others. (They must have a thing for impressive doors here). I pushed it ajar, and stepped in. I looked around, smiling. This was by far the most impressive room yet. The ceiling seemed so high, and on the sidewalls were bookshelves stacked with thousand of books and papers. There were several doors, concealed in the shelves as well. The back wall

was made entirely out of glass, and offered a scenic view over to the pond at the front. But framed by that window, was a man sat at a desk. A grey haired, pale, extremely handsome man, with eyes devoid of any emotion.

"Good afternoon, Miss Lee," the man said, rolling his lips back over his gums, revealing his awesomely sharp fangs.

"Oh, Your Majesty, I, I'm so sorry, I was just"- I hastily curtsied, throwing my pride aside swifter than I thought possible. But he cut in.

"It does not pay, Miss Lee, to enter rooms without first knocking. Or indeed entering the rooms you wish to see at all." His voice was deep and slightly hoarse, but still lured me in. It was like - I had heard him speak before.

"Now go, before I am forced to teach you a lesson." I practically ran towards the door, regretting ever coming in. But just as I was pulling the door closed, he suddenly sat up straight, and said something that knocked the wind from my lungs.

"Your father knows about us Miss Violet Lee. His position in government gives him that privilege. He knows all that we do." He bared his fangs, smiling menacingly, as though taunting me gave him great pleasure. I slammed the door shut, gasping for breath.

MY FATHER KNEW ABOUT VAMPIRES?!?

So he would know what had happened in Trafalgar Square. At least have an idea. So did that mean he knew where I was? Who I was with? Did he know I was alive?

I leant against the wall, still breathing heavily as the shock left my system. I wanted answers. Answers I couldn't get. I punched the wall in frustration, but it just grazed my knuckles, and hurt like hell. Damn, I bruised like a peach as well.

"Shit," I breathed, as I realised a tiny trickle of blood was flowing from my raw knuckle. I quickly wiped it away, really not wanting to attract, any, err... unwanted attention.

"Daddy says you shouldn't swear, its unladylike," said a cute little voice from below me. I jumped a little, surprised at the sudden sound. I looked down, and there stood a little girl.

"Who are you?" I said surprised. She looked about four, and had real cute, big round emerald eyes. Her long blonde hair fell in tight ringlets around her face, and she had perfect features, right down to her cute little nose. Too cute.

"I am Princess Thyme," she sung, twirling around, making her pink frilly dress fly up, and whip around after her. She smiled, revealing tiny fangs. So that explained the pink room with the torn up teddies upstairs.

"Thyme, as in the herb?" She nodded.

"And you are Violet, and Kaspar and Cain brought you from London." It was a statement, not a question. I said nothing, astounded at the sureness she had of herself.

"So you are Kaspar's little sister then?" I asked. I kept my distance, creeped out by her eyes, which never left mine.

"And Cain's and Lyla's and Jag's and Sky's," she said, doing another pirouette.

"Who are Jag and Sky?" I asked, knowing she would give me any answer I wanted.

"They are my big, big brothers. They are really, really old," she stated proudly. "I like them better."

"And why is that?" I asked, fascinated by her - openness.

"Because they play with me when they come and stay." She said, pouting, looking down at the ground.

"Don't your other brothers and sister? Not even Lyla?" I asked, becoming more and more interested in this little girls life.

"Never. They just tell me to go away when I go and ask." Her bottom lip was quivering, and I saw tears brimming in her eyes.

"Hey, hey, sshh." I said crouching down to her. I didn't mean to make her cry. Vampires can cry?

I warily took her little hand in mine. "I'll play with you, if you want," I cooed.

Her little eyes filled with hope, and she looked up at me. "Really?"

I smiled back, showing I was serious. I couldn't stand to see a little kid cry, and I hated cruel brothers and sisters even more. She tightened her grip around my hand, and began to pull me along. Suddenly she stopped, and said:

"Will you carry me?"

"Erm, yeah, sure." I stuttered taken aback. She took a running leap, and jumped up onto my back. We walked down the corridor, me carrying her piggyback style.

"Do you have a sister?" Thyme asked, twiddling with my hair.

"Yeah, I have a little sister... well, she isn't little any more, she is thirteen." I explained.

"What's her name," Thyme said with vague interest, more absorbed with my hair now.

"Lily," I answered. "That's a pretty name," Thyme said.

"Do you have a brother?" She carried on.

"I... did. He... died." I mumbled.

"That's sad," she replied, but I couldn't tell is she meant it or not.

"Yeah, yeah it is," I breathed. Suddenly she tugged a strand of my hair, and I winced.

"Do you have a mummy and daddy?" I turned my head, and saw her cute little face twisted with something I couldn't read.

"Yeah, but they are never around. They are always working. Its why me and my sister are so close"- I stopped myself, wondering why I was telling this to a little four year old girl. My eyes misted over, as I remembered coming home time and time again, just to be told dad had gone away on important business.

Business that was probably to do with vampires, I told myself.

"My daddy is always too busy to play with me. He is always in a bad mood," Thyme said, her voice sulky. I nodded, knowing exactly what she meant. But I could see from her face not to probe anymore.

We fell into silence for a while. She started playing with my hair again, twisting it around her finger. After a few minutes, she spoke.

"You're really pretty," she said, sounding like music flowed from her lips.

"Thanks," I said, blushing. "You are really cute," I replied.

"I know," she answered. She gave a little sigh. "I wish I had a sister like you. You are better than Lyla, and much nicer than those horrible girls Kaspar keeps bringing home." She muttered darkly.

"Oh, and who are they?" I asked, trying not to seem to interested.

"His friends. But they always stay for the whole night, and they are really mean to me," she blabbered.

Wow. I didn't know they made whores and bitches rolled into one. Mental note. Remember that one. Good comeback, I thought.

We fell back into silence again. All of a sudden, I felt an all too familiar icy feeling on the back of my neck. I almost dropped Thyme, stunned at what was happening.

"What the heck are you doing?" I screeched, as she ran her teeth up and down my neck. She pulled away, giving me a toothy grin.

"I'm not going to bite you, silly!" she giggled. "I am smelling you. You smell so sweet," she trailed off, her eyes darkening. I was pretty sure she was not on about my perfume.

"Just don't do that okay? It freaks me out." I replied, trying to keep my cool, whilst eyeing her suspiciously.

"Okay Violet!" She sung with false innocence.

Eventually she pointed out a door, and told me that it was her playroom. We went in. Everything in here was a pale yellow, from the walls to the rocking horse. We played for what seemed like hours, with her dolls, her train set, her dressing up clothes, and of course, we had to have a tea party.

We were just having imaginary cake, when my stomach gave a loud growl, craving real food. I glanced at the clock on the wall. Blimey, it was half four!

"Erm, Thyme, this has been really fun, but do you think we could go to the kitchen and get something to eat? I'm real hungry," I pleaded.

"Okay." She jumped onto my back, and off we headed again. I had no idea where we were, until we reached the servants staircase, and I recognised the main corridor. I headed down it, and a few minutes later, we broke out into the light of the entrance hall. I stepped out into the hall, when I spotted Kaspar leant against the banisters. Great.

"THYME! Why aren't you with your nanny?" He barked suddenly. I stopped, determined to hold my

ground. Thyme wiggled out of my grip, and fell to the floor, scurrying behind me. She peaked out from behind me leg, tears brimming in her eyes, but not falling.

"Hey, give her a break! She's only little!" I practically shouted at him. His face went from blank to furious in less than a second, and I saw his eyes turn darker, greyer. (What was up with the colour-changing thing anyway?)

"Thyme, go to your room now! I need to have a little word with your friend here." His voice boomed across the room and Thyme went scurrying away, up the stairs. I saw his smile, if you could call it that. It was cruel, and I knew he meant business. He roughly grabbed my shoulder, and pulled me through the huge, grand door out of the entrance hall.

Wow, talk about a ballroom. It was huge, probably the size of half the ground floor, which was like three tennis courts put together. Everything was made of white marble speckled with gold, and the huge pillars that were embedded in the wall were gold leaf. The floor was made of a polished wood, perfect

for dancing. The door we had just entered through was raised slightly, creating a balcony. You had to descend several stairs before you could reach the floor, and begin dancing. Just perfect for grand entrances. This grand entrance was in the middle of the room. At either end were huge windows and to the left of us was a raised platform with a black throne set upon it. But what really caught my eye was the enormous chandelier dangling precariously ten metres above us. It was made of glass, and was so delicate it looked like it might break at any moment. It held thousands of black candles, all unlit. I could just imagine what it would be like, dancing under the light of a thousand flickering candles, watching couples swirl around and around perfectly in unison, swaying gently to the flow of the music. And then-

"How dare you tell me how to treat my own sister!" Kasper had suddenly turned, and was steaming with rage. He stalked towards me, forcing me to back up against the closed door.

"You know nothing of my family! Nothing!" he shouted, baring his fangs.

"I know enough," I said coolly back. Something suddenly felt out of place in my mind, and I searched through, trying to figure out what it was. And then my gaze fixed on Kaspar, who was staring intently at my forehead, as though he was searching for something. And then I realised what he was doing. It was the same feeling I had had earlier when I had been talking to Fabian. Like I was being searched.

They were reading my mind. Kaspar was reading my mind.

Realising he could see every memory, I struggled to focus on one thought. I settled on the word jerk. I practically screamed it in my head, and pretty quickly, I felt him withdraw his presence. Phew.

"No. You know nothing. So don't make judgements." He looked calmer now, but his face seemed troubled. Suddenly he was right in front of me, his body pressed up against mine.

"Do you fear me, Violet Lee? Do you know what I could do to you?" He whispered in my ear.

"I'm not scared of you." I forced to keep my voice steady, as the adrenalin began pumping through my system.

"Do you want me? Do you lust for me Violet?" He whispered, his lips brushing my ear, sending shivers down my spine.

"No!" I said defiantly.

"Oh, but your body tells me different. You fear me, yet you want me." He pressed himself further into me, pressing me into the door. I could feel each one of his frosty breaths on my face, irregular, jagged, coming in short sharp rasps. He was coming on to me! "I'm royalty, I'm rich, and I am damned good looking. Girls fall at my feet. But you don't. You can resist. Why is that?" He murmured, like he was talking to himself.

"Because you are a bloodsucker."

His head snapped up, and his mesmerizing eyes met mine. "Is that so? Well I will get to you, Violet Lee," he lingered on my name, drawing his sentence out. "You

will give in to your lust, I will make sure of it." He let those words hang in the air.

"Typical rich boy; always wants what he just can't get. How pathetic." I sneered. "Well, I have news for you, 'Your Highness'. You won't get me!" I made to move to the side, away from him, but he placed his hands either side of my head, slowly dragging his nails down the wood, making a horrendous screeching sound, like nails on a blackboard. He ran his hands all the way down, until they reached my waist. His hands moved around to my back, pulling me into him, and he slowly began caressing my waist and stomach, moving one hand down until it reached my thigh.

"Get. Off. Me. You have whores for this!" I scorned. His eyes found mine again, and I saw, I dunno, something in them. "Yes, that's right, I know about your 'friends.' Do you pay them? Is that how you actually get someone to shag you? Or are they just as low as you?" I smirked, realizing I had touched a nerve as he got angrier. His eyes turned jet black in an instant.

"You will pay for that one girly!" he said darkly.

In one swift movement, he had brushed the hair from my neck away, and bent my head away. In the corner of my eye, I could see him lowering his jaw to my neck, slowing baring his teeth until his fangs were all I could see, all that I knew, all that I feared.

"No - please... don't!" I begged, cowering away from him, terrified of the pain that would shortly come. "I will teach you to fear me, human. You will be seduced by me, and I will do with you what I will," he replied, taking no notice of my terrified pleas for mercy. With his taunting words, I suddenly felt pain, as his fangs pierced my skin. They drove deep into my flesh, ripping my tender skin. I cried out in pain, unable to stop myself.

But what came next was far worse. He began to drink my blood.

I felt him slowly draw my blood through my smarting wound. He was silent, save for the occasional sickly slurp. I fought the urge to puke. It felt like my very soul was being sucked from deep within me. But then, it ended.

His fangs left my flesh, and he slowly, sensually licked my neck clean. "You taste sweet." He stated. He brought his eyes up to meet mine once more, but my eyes flicked to his lips, which I saw were coated in blood.

My blood.

I felt weak, and my knees began to buckle. Only the force of him pushing me into the door kept me upright. "The Prince of Darkness always gets what he wants," he breathed. He drew away from me, and I crumpled to the floor, pale, sickened, and totally weak. He pulled open the door, but just before he left, his eyes met mine one final time. His face was devoid of all the usual emotions it carried. Instead, it was confused. Confused? Suddenly he spoke.

"I did always wonder what it would be like to sleep with a human." With that, he stalked silently away, leaving me whimpering on the floor, very quickly learning how to fear him.

Chapter 9

# Dinner With A Vampire. Did I Mention I'm Vegetarian? (9)

Dinner With A Vampire. Did I Mention I'm Vegetarian? (Chapter 9)

"So, how would you describe your style?" Lyla asked, pulling random clothes down from the racks.

We were stood in her gigantic wardrobe, surrounded by more clothes than I had ever seen in my life. I barely heard her. I was pre-occupied. The scene with Kaspar yesterday kept playing itself over and over in my mind, tormenting me. I hadn't told anyone, and I didn't plan to.

"Slutty?" She probed.

"Hey! That dress was a one off!" I protested, being brought back to reality with the aimed insult.

"Uh-huh..." she trailed off, walking to the far end of the wardrobe. My mind began to wander once more. I hated to admit it, but he scared me. Who was I kidding? He scared me shitless. But... something told me he would not hurt me. Not truly. Well, I knew he wouldn't kill me. And, safe with that unexplained knowledge, I had a plan forming. I smirked. Oh, this would be fun. I was going to make his life hell.

"Violet! Violet!" An exasperated voice called.

"Oh, sorry," I said, coming back to Earth with a jolt. She let out an exaggerated sigh, rolling her eyes.

"I said, what is your style then? I got everything," She smirked, gesturing at all the clothes around us.

"Erm, well I guess kinda emo. But... less random than emo. Lots of band-tees. And the occasional dress. Does that make sense?" I finished, even managing to confuse myself.

"Got-cha. Preppy-meets-emo-gone-punk." Lyla replied, grabbing clothes off the rails at her lightning

speed. "Here, try these. There all your size, so they should keep you ticking over until we can get your stuff." She handed me about seven or eight different outfits, all in my style. She piled the bundle into my arms, and I walked into the washroom. I began stripping down, trying each outfit on, one by one. It was an assortment of skinny jeans, band-tees, hoodies, tank tops, short shorts, tight fitting stuff, mini-skirts and a dress or two.

As I changed, I called lazily through the door. "So, remind me why you can't get my stuff until next week?"

"Because we have to wait until the media hype dies down around your disappearance, otherwise its gonna look weird, if suddenly all your stuff goes missing from your house. Long as it escapes the press, we're good." She replied, as if she was repeating a well-rehearsed speech.

I groaned. "Are you sure its not just Kaspar, exacting his revenge?"

"Oh that too. Besides, do you know how hard it is to get six teenage boy equivalents to actually do

anything like this? And darling, feel sorry for me, I have to go with them. Otherwise they wouldn't know what clothes to get, and they would deffo go through your bras."

"Pervs." I muttered.

"Tell me about it." Lyla replied. I started. I hadn't expected her to hear that.

I walked out of the washroom, my arms once more full of clothes.

"All good?" Lyla asked, turning as I walked out. I nodded.

"Are you sure you don't mind me borrowing all this? I mean"-

"Girl, you can keep them for all I care. Trust me; you are doing me a favour. I have way too many clothes."

"Thanks!" I beamed, this stuff must cost a fortune!

She handed me another two pairs of converse, and several scarves. "That will do you for a while." I walked into her bedroom. "You can hang around here for a bit, if you want. The boys can't be much

fun," she said, smiling. I nodded gratefully, and dumped my stuff on her bed. Too right, the boys weren't much fun. I loved this room. Everything was hot pink and black, from her double bed to her curtains. I sat in silence for a while, watching Lyla attempt, yes attempt to tidy her room up. It wasn't working.

"The maids keep complaining," she said apologetically. Hmm, that reminded me, I must go and see Annie some time. I stood up absentmindedly, and began snatching things off the floor. Lyla saw what I was doing, and beamed at me. She watched me for a while, and then began copying me. Guess she had never tidied her room. Yes, I was teaching a three hundred and twenty-one year old how to tidy her room.

As we worked, we talked. I endlessly asked questions, but Lyla never got tired of answering them.

"So, do the boys actually live here? Other than your brothers, obviously."

"Yup, pretty much. They always have done. They do go home sometimes though. But mostly, here," she answered.

"How come?" I probed.

"They are just good friends, and they like to go hunting together, kick slayer butt, that sort of thing. I guess they are a sort of gang."

"Oh," I replied. More questions bugged my racing mind, but I knew better than to ask them. No, I had to be tactful with those questions. Especially if I wanted answers.

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Many hours later, I sat at the baby grand piano in my room, absentmindedly playing arpeggios. I couldn't be bothered to actually play anything, and besides, I loved the melancholy sound of the notes resounding in the dusty silence. Without really noticing I started playing Andare by Ludovico Einaudi (See links at the top for this beautiful piece of music).

I had played piano for as long as I could remember, since I was smaller than Thyme. I could sing too, and

play a bit of guitar. Music was my life. More than my life. It was a part of me, like the stars are a part of the night sky, or coral a part of a tropical reef. I heard music in everything, from the chirping of the birds, to the low hums of planes passing above. And music helped me to think. The sound of the notes cleared my head, allowing clear thought to enter.

No more mention of the decision I must make had been made. Not a word. Perhaps they assumed I was too sickened to even consider becoming one of them? Was I? Could I face the possibility of becoming a vampire?

Or would I make the choice to stay captive? I couldn't believe that they could keep me from my family forever. Surely one day they would find me? Right?

And what if I did become a vampire? How would I survive? I was clever, yes, but I hadn't attended Oxford University as I had planned (I was meant to, until I was rudely kidnapped). Would I end up like Annie, without a family, turned by some random vampire, and left in this terrifying new world without a friend to depend on? (I had asked her why

she was here earlier. She had been turned by an unknown vampire forty years ago. Her family cast her out upon discovering her secret, and she ended up here to try and survive).

I knew I wouldn't be able to hide forever, but for now... did I have much choice? I couldn't escape, in both senses, I knew that. I sighed, frustrated enough to start playing the wrong notes. I let out a humph, and stopped playing.

My eyes began to droop, and tired, I walked over to the bed. I couldn't be bothered to change, so I just slipped off my shoes and swung myself into the cosy bed. I pulled the black glossy sheets tightly around myself, and gave into my bodies demand to sleep. That would be one great thing about being a vampire, I thought lazily... not having to sleep. I smiled at that thought, and graciously obeyed as sleep overcame me.

BANG!

I woke with a start, sitting bolt upright in bed. What the fuck was that?

BANG!

Okay, that was just weird. It sounded like it was coming from the wall opposite me, the wall that backed onto my bathroom. I slipped out of bed, and quietly tiptoed to my walk in wardrobe. I pulled open the door, and suck across to the far end, glad of the carpeted floor, as it cushioned my footsteps.

I pressed my ear to the wall, but quickly jumped back as-

BANG!

Bloody hell! It was coming from Kaspar's room, next door. It sounded like a bed banging against the wall, like-

"Ohhh Kaspar..." a whiney voice said. A woman's voice. "Yes! Oh my god, yes! Yes!"

I jumped back from the wall, and backed away as quickly as possible. No way. No fucking way.

KASPAR HAD ONE OF HIS 'FRIENDS' ROUND. Great. Just great. I practically sprinted out of my wardrobe, not wanting to hear... that.

I bound back into my bed, and tried to muffle the sound by smothering myself with a pillow. Lets say it didn't work.

It went on for hours. I lay awake, my eyes wide, pulling out my hair practically, as I listened to this whore's moans of ecstasy, and Kaspar's occasional grunt. No - it went on all night. I lay there, more than tired, getting gradually grumpier.

He was going to pay for this. Oh was he going to pay for this.

Chapter 10

# Dinner With A Vampire. Did I Mention I'm Vegetarian? (10)

Dinner With A Vampire. Did I Mention I'm Vegetarian? (Chapter 10)

"ANNIE!" I screeched, running flat out down the downstairs corridor.

"ANNIE!" I slowed down to a jog when I passed the King's study, but quickly sped up again. I reached the servants staircase, and leapt down taking four steps at a time, until I came to a skittering halt in front of the basement door, otherwise known as the 'The Escape'. It was fondly named this because this is literally where the staff came to escape the stresses of

serving the royal family, (not to mention the moodiness!)

In front of me were the vast basement kitchens, covering the same area as the ballroom upstairs. There were used for formal events, where vampires actually ate normal food. To my left, down the corridor, was the actual 'escape'. I followed the unlit stone corridor, until I reached the living room. I knew Annie would have heard me a mile off, and sure enough, she stood at the entrance, arms folded, a surprised and slightly annoyed look on her face.

"Violet, what are you doing here? They ain't no scrubbin' today?" she asked in her thick cockney accent.

"No, I'm not here for that, but you know you said if there was anything at all you could help me with...?"

She nodded her head warily. The past three days I had been helping her with her duties as scullery maid, washing dishes, scrubbing the kitchens, that sort of thing. And in return she had agreed to do me any favour.

"And you know the chambermaids right?" I asked sheepishly.

She nodded once more.

"Well, do you think I could help one out for today?"

She gave me a puzzled look, before calling over her shoulder.

"Margaret! Someone here to see you!" Within seconds, a girl no older than eighteen stepped from the room, although I knew here, looks could deceive. Her dark brown hair was done in a tight perm and piled on top of her head, held back by a thick alice band. She wore the same outfit as Annie, but with a white pinafore. She was pretty, in a kind of 1940's way, and of course, a vampire.

"Violet 'ere wants to help you out with the bedrooms. That okay?" Annie said. Margaret looked down at me through suspicious brown eyes.

"I don't get it? Why would you want to help"- She began, her accent quite plain. But I cut in.

"I have a little surprise for HRH Kaspar." I explained, a wicked grin spreading across my face. Annie and Margaret took one look at each other, small smiles forming on their mouths too.

"This is have to see!" Annie exclaimed, before pulling me back down the corridor.

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I had not slept a wink in three nights. Every night so far had been interrupted by various moans and groans, coming from a different girl each night. In fact, last night I was pretty sure it was two girls.

This dramatic loss of sleep was seriously affecting my mood. Trust me, you do not want to get in the way of a sleep-deprived Violet.

We reached the door to Kaspar's room, and we all stopped nervously outside. I had already told them my plan, and had promised I would take all the blame.

Margaret timidly knocked, and softly called through the door; "Your Highness, it's the maid, here to clean your room." There was no answer. Margaret knocked

once more, harder this time. We waited a minute, and there was still no answer. We all exchanged glances.

"Maybe he has gone hunting or something?" I suggested, seriously hoping I was right. Margaret slowly turned the handle, and allowed the door to swing open a little. She poked her head in, sniffing the air.

"I can't catch his scent," Margaret said. She opened the door, and we all filed in. She picked up her cleaning things, and gently closed the door behind her. She quickly began sweeping up, Annie helping. We didn't want to be around here long.

"Where did you say he kept them?" I said in a hushed tone, although I clearly didn't need to whisper.

"Try the drawers in the bedside table, and under the bed. Oh, and the bathroom cabinet." Margaret whispered back. There was definitely a sense that we shouldn't be here, even though Margaret cleaned in here all the time.

"Oh, and don't forget to try behind the clock on the mantle piece!" Annie added, in an excited whisper. I nodded, showing I heard her. I dashed about, pulling open drawers, checking under the carpets. Sure enough, in the bathroom cabinet there was a box, three behind the clock, and two boxes in the drawers.

I lay down on my stomach, and crawled army style under the bed. I fought the urge to scream as a gigantic spider scuttled past. But I hit gold, there were boxes and boxes here, all un-opened. I gathered them up, and piled them on the newly made bed, along with the others. I did one last sweep of the room, checking to see if I missed any. I hadn't.

I returned back to the bed, and hastily began emptying the boxes of their contents. I tipped each upside down, letting the contents fall onto the bed in a pile. I then chucked the empty boxes in Annie's rubbish bag. I took great handfuls of the pile, stuffing the contents in my pockets.

"I'll be right back," I said to the two girls. I dashed out, stopping to check if the cost was clear. I tried to walk casually down to the kitchen, luckily not

meeting anyone. When I reached the kitchen, I headed straight for the fridge. I pulled the almost empty bottle of blood the boy's had been drinking a few days ago from the shelf, and quickly poured the thick 'drink' down the sink. I have to say, it did smell sweet, almost sickly so. In fact, it reminded me of the smell of my favourite perfume. Weird huh?

I washed out the bottle, and began taking the packets out of my pocket. Yes - packets. I poked each one into the bottle, before tightly screwing up the lid. Haha, screwing. I think I knew someone who wouldn't be doing much of that tonight.

I ran back up the stairs, taking two at a time. I bolted back into Kaspar's room, breathless. The other two were just finishing off. I took the one remaining empty box, and stared at it.

"Are you sure he won't just go ahead anyway?" I asked, my eyes darting to where Annie stood in the corner of them room. I was having doubts about my plan.

"No, 'cos if anything goes wrong, then that's the whole kingdom done for," she explained matter of

factly, like the end of a monarchy was perfectly normal. I slowly let a grin spread across my face. Now for the finishing touches. I searched around, until I found a piece of paper and a pen. I quickly scrawled a note out, and placed it in the empty box. It read:

Always use protection sucker!

I chucked the now empty condom box into the drawer in his bedside cabinet, and staggered out along with Annie and Margaret, all three of us suppressing giggles. I smiled as I thought of my devious plan.

That'll teach that horny bastard!!!

- - - - - - - - - - - - - -

It was just a waiting game now. The minutes seemed to inch by, taunting me.

Wow, vampire teen magazines were juicy.

I was flicking through a magazine of Lyla's I had stolen, laughing at the many pictures of the Varn

family drunk. (Varn is Kaspar, Cain's, Lyla's and Thyme's last name, in case you didn't know).

It had begun to get dark, and I had already drawn my curtains. I was lying on my bed, lazily picking my way through a chocolate bar I had also stolen.

It seemed to take forever, but eventually, I heard a girlish giggle coming from the corridor, and recognised it as the same whore from the first night. She seemed to be his favourite or something. This was the third time she had been over, spreading her bleach blonde trampness. Gold digger as far as I was concerned.

Yeah, I had met her. Over 'breakfast'. Lets say it didn't go too well. She had called me a human bitch. So I called her a bloodsucking whore. And I hadn't seen her since. Mind you, that was yesterday. Her name is Charity, but she is anything but - trust me.

I heard yet more giggles, and then the words, "oh, Kaspar." I was pretty sure where they were up to now. He would just be opening his drawer. And, sure enough, a few seconds later-

"VIOLET!!!!!!!!!"

I let out a satisfied smile, as his furious shout echoed around the walls.

Chapter 11

# Dinner With A Vampire. Did I Mention I'm Vegetarian? (11)

Dinner With A Vampire. Did I Mention I'm Vegetarian? (Chapter 11)

"BITCH!" Kaspar roared, breaking through the bolt lock on my door. If vampires flushed, I knew his face would be beetroot red, but instead only his eyes showed his true anger. They were a bottomless black, and the whites of his eyes were red. They didn't look-human.

I hid behind my magazine, trying to hide my sniggers. For some reason I wasn't scared. I don't know why, so don't ask. I was trying to keep my cool,

the I-don't-give-a-damn-what-your-saying type attitude.

Charity cough*whore*cough walked into the room, wearing a barely-there dress. Her hair was sticking out at odd angles, and her make up was smudged, especially her lipstick. She glared at me through narrowed eyes.

"What the heck is your problem, human?!" She screeched at me in her annoying whiney voice.

"Well, there is a very long list, but its mainly the fact I haven't slept in three days. Why - is there a problem?" I threw them both my most innocent smile, biting my tongue to stop myself laughing.

Kaspar's eyes became wider, angrier, and in a blur, he had launched himself across the room. He collided with my side with an almighty thump! And I was sent rolling across the bed, coming to a halt after my head hit the bedside cabinet. I let out a scream, as Kaspar landed on top of me, pinning me to the bed (and my head to the bedside cabinet). I winced through gritted teeth as the corner of the cabinet dug into my spine.

"Get off me you horny bastard!" I roared, kicking and flailing, hating his closeness.

"Why, am I making you uncomfortable bitch? Maybe I will just use you instead!" he snarled, a tormenting smile scaring his face. His eyes were devoid of any emotion - he meant it. He was straddling me, one leg either side of my stomach, forcing me deeper into the mattress. I didn't reply, but kept on trying my escape.

And then, as suddenly as he had landed on top of me, he was gone. I raised my head a little to see Fabian and Charlie wrestling him away, gaining quite a few scratches. Wrenching myself back from my stupor, I scrabbled back up, banging my head again as I did. I backed up against the wall, my arms folded defensively across my chest.

"What the heck is going on here?" Fabian bellowed. He looked each and every one of us in the eye, daring us to lie. I noticed everybody else had filed into the room, except Thyme and the King. The others were looking at Kaspar puzzled. Guess he wasn't letting them read his mind.

"That bitch stole Kaspar's condoms!" Charity squealed, pointing at me. I couldn't stop myself, I ruptured into a fit of giggles. Her face... it was just too worth it.

"Is that true Violet?" Fabian asked diplomatically. My uncontrollable giggles made the answer to that quite clear. He sighed, his face disappointed.

"Where are they?" His voice sounded exasperated. I shook my head, refusing to answer. I was still laughing my head off.

All of a sudden, I felt eight very powerful, very intrusive minds enter mine. Eight very painful jabs in my brain. I fought to hide everything, but somehow, the details of my plan slipped through. I thanked god that didn't include Annie and Margaret's names.

"Kitchen." Declan grunted. They all flew out in a blur. It took me a second to clear my mind once more. When I found my senses, I raced after them, sprinting down the stairs. I skidded across the floor, regretting wearing socks then. I slowed down on the

carpeted floor of the living room, before almost slipping over in the corridor again.

I tore into the kitchen, to see them pulling the bottle from the fridge. They were staring at it, stunned.

What I forgot to mention, was that when I had 'misplaced' the condoms, I had left a little of the blood in there. And a lot of water.

Blood + Water x fifty condoms = Ruined.

Every single one, ruined. I smiled manically to myself.

Oh, was revenge sweet.

In unison, they all turned to me, totally stunned. Nobody moved for a whole minute. And then, Whore's face went from stunned, to disappointed, to murderous. And so she dived at me.

It was at that point I knew I was done-for.

I was turning to run, but she was already flying towards me, razor-sharp pink-acrylic nails bared. She stopped in front of me, and lunged for my face. I felt her nails gouge my skin, and I let out a pained

scream. I backed away, but she came towards me, pushing me into the wall. She took another swipe, but I threw my full body weight at her, aiming to push her away. She was weak - for a vampire. She went stumbling backwards into the breakfast bar, tripping over her 6 inch Barbie pink high heels. They just screamed slut. If she had to do slut, she might as well do it with style. Sheesh. (And yes, I do think that in the middle of a cat fight - its motivational).

I walked up to her, raised my clenched fist, and threw her a punch - right on the nose. I didn't hear it break, it probably hurt me more than her. But it drew blood. I was satisfied. I turned around, ready to walk away.

"Don't walk away from me you fat jealous cow!" She spat, blood dripping from her nose. I whipped back around. Nobody calls me jealous. Ever.

"Excuse me?" I hissed.

"I said you're a fat jealous cow!"-

"I know what you said, you idiot. And is today a special occasion or something, or are you always so stupid?" I jeered back.

Her eyes went from blue, to red to black in an instant. I saw her getting angrier. I was enjoying this.

"Once a whore, you're nothing more I guess. Sorry 'darling' but that will never change." I mocked, forcing sympathy into my voice.

"Take that back!" She screamed.

"No," I said coolly. Her eyes were flashing between black and red, never pausing. Black for anger, red for bloodlust. Oh shit, bloodlust.

She flew through the air, roughly grabbing my neck, mouth already wide, ready to bite. I yelled, trying to throw her off. I kneed her in the stomach, and she winced, loosening her grip slightly. She scratched me once more, but before she could do any more, we were being pulled apart. Fabian's strong arms were wrapped tightly around my stomach, risking serious injury, as I, furious, lashed out at anything in sight. Charity was equally angry. I looked up, and saw Kaspar pulling Charity away. She wasn't struggling, but she threw insult after insult at me, antagonizing me even more.

"Bitch!"

"Whore!" I screamed back.

"I hate you, you stupid cow! Your stealing my Kaspar!"

"Your Kaspar?! And besides, I wouldn't go near him with a bargepole!"

"Whatever! You're just a weak little human! You just can't get over the fact that I am a better version of you! Far better!"

"What, a better version of a human? Any similarities between you and a human are purely coincidental! Your parasites! That's what you are! SICK!" I shrieked, my voice going hoarse I was shouting so loud. The anger rose in me, far more overpowering than any other time I had been here.

"ENOUGH!!!" A voice bellowed.

I looked up, and saw the King standing there. He was angry, and he wasn't hiding it. His eyes were pure black.

The vampires immediately straightened up, bowing and curtseying, choruses of "Your Majesty" echoing around the room. Fabian stood up with difficulty, his arms still clenched around me, preventing me from lunging at the whore in front of me.

I said nothing, and instead spat on the floor, in a clear show of disrespect.

I mean, why should I have respect for them?

"I have never seen anything like this from two young ladies! How dare you! You are dishonouring your families, not to mention yourselves!" he shouted.

Yeah, what family? They didn't know where I was!

Charity glared at me, clearly blaming me for her shame, which showed in her eyes.

Was I ashamed? Heck, no! I faked boredom, pretending to yawn.

"Violet, you are dismissed!" the King said, slightly calmer now. And oh, I had to be dismissed now did I?

"Thank god!" I said. I wrestled free of Fabian's grip, brushing myself down, making sure to exaggerate the movement.

"You went too far this time Violet," Fabian said as I began to walk away. The disappointment showed in his voice. For a moment, I did feel shame, but I shoved it from my mind. It was worth it I told myself. I turned.

"Oh, I know." I smiled manically. Just to let them know:

1) I would do it again.

2) I am evil when I want to be, and I love it.

3) Violet Lee fights dirty.

I think they got the message, don't you?

Chapter 12

# Dinner with a vampire. Did I mention I'm vegetarian? (12)

Dinner with a vampire. Did I mention I'm vegetarian? (Chapter 12)

This is quite deep. The story has themes, and grief is one of them. And I haven't proof-read it either. It is pretty raw. You have been warned.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=73-V2A3NuWo&feature=channel_page

Room arrest.

They have put me under room arrest.

I have been stuck in this room for two whole days. It was the morning of the 7th of August, which means I

had been stuck in this infernal mansion for a few hours over a week. I was keeping a tally on the wall under my bed. That is just how loopy I was going.

Stuck in a room with only a piano for company. (Which isn't all that bad really). You would go loopy.

And the food. The food! Vampires. Cannot. Cook. Period.

The past two days I have been surviving on cereal, cereal, and oh, did I mention cereal? I tell a lie. I got a cheese sandwich if I was lucky.

And all because Charity had been staying over. Why couldn't they put her under room arrest? Why?

On the bright side, she was leaving this morning. Which meant I was free.

Bad news is that means Kaspar would have a different whore over tonight.

It's a wonder the King even allows that, I thought to myself, as I lolled about in my room. I mean Kaspar is heir. I thought heirs were meant to be good little children?

I kept anxiously glancing at the clock, waiting for it to turn 10am. The second hand inched around, becoming slower and slower. Finally, the big hand reach the twelve, and I heard the roar of an engine outside. I rushed to the French doors, and peeked out.

Roaring away down the drive was a light blue Audi TT convertible, bleach blonde tramp driving. Well I hope a whole bunch of flies get stuck in her teeth.

FREE!

I rushed to the door, pulling it open, running and twirling my way down the stairs. Never take freedom for granted.

As usual I went skidding across the entrance hall. Man - this place was like an indoor ice rink! I pulled open the living room door, planning to make myself a fry-up. Everyone was gathered around the sofa's, some sat, some stood, staring at the television like it had blown up or something. I followed their gaze, slowly walking forward.

My face was plastered one hundred inches across on the TV, the words MISSING! above.

My mouth fell open, as I watched, stunned. My face. On the TV. My school photo from last year as well. (Typical!)

"That's... that's me!" I stuttered. Full points for stupidity. Declan looked up and acknowledged my presence, but said nothing. The others remained where they were, frozen in time. Eerily still, staring at the screen.

Suddenly the BBC News music came blaring through the speakers, and my mouth became wider, if that was even possible. I was on the news.

The music finished, and the news anchors looked up.

"Our first story today. Violet Lee, daughter of the Secretary of State for Defence, Michael Lee, has officially been reported as missing."

My face popped up once again.

"Miss Lee was reportedly last seen on the night of the 31st August at around 1am, in the area around

Trafalgar Square. Fears have arisen that she may have witnessed the murder of thirty men on that night - dubbed London's Bloodbath, and been taken by the killers. A search is under way by the Metropolitan Police, although there is little hope as Miss Lee is believed to be dead, although no body has been found."

The screen switched to footage of several police officers with sniffer dogs, searching the outskirts of London.

"It has been confirmed that a high heeled show found at the scene of the murder, is indeed Miss Lee's, although police have dismissed the idea of her being a suspect." A picture of my shoe in a clear plastic bag appeared behind the male anchor's head.

"Questions have been raised as to why Miss Lee's disappearance was not reported earlier, and today the defence minister gave in to public pressure and made a statement in parliament."

My father appeared, clutching my mother to his side. They were in the houses of parliament, but I couldn't tell you where. I choked a little as I saw them, and a

wave of homesickness overtook me. Tears fell down my mother's cheeks, but my father's expression was calm, controlled. Just like it always was when he was dealing with a 'situation.'

"We are working with the police to try and find our daughter, and we would like to thank them for their support." He said, talking into a microphone. "They have been amazing," my mother interjected. I saw her swallow back a sob.

"Do you think this may be the work of anti-war protestors, who oppose your decision to send more troops to Afghanistan?" A reporter called over the babble.

"I refuse to comment on politics. This is not the time or place. We just want our daughter back. We... we miss her." I saw water well in my father's eyes, and his bottom lip quivered.

He was crying.

I had never seen my father cry.

My eyes stung as crystal tears formed. I watched as my mother broke into uncontrolled sobs. I wanted to reach out and touch her. I wanted to comfort her.

Tell her I was okay.

Even though I wasn't.

Even though I wouldn't come out of this human.

"Please, please... whoever... whoever, has done this, have pity, please... let my beautiful Violet come home. She doesn't deserve this. Please... please," my mother begged, breaking down into heart-wrenching sobs. Tears silently rolled down my cheeks. I was frozen to the spot, wanting to stop watching, needing to, but unable to tear my eyes from the screen.

At that point the film ended, and the anchor people appeared once more, faces glum.

"Miss Lee is seventeen years old, and will be eighteen on the 28th August and is around five foot, seven inches in height. Personal footage has been released by the family to try and help publicize her disappearance."

The screen was filled by film of my last birthday - my seventeenth. My dad was filming, I could tell, and I was at home, in the living room, beaming from ear to ear. I jumped around, laughing with glee as I opened presents. Clothes, shoes, chocolate.

A sweet peck on the lips from Joel, handing me a tiny parcel - a necklace with a V on it, the words 'Forever Strong' engraved in the silver.

Ruby there too, rugby tackling me to the floor to give me a hug, ticking me playfully.

My mother, handing me a cake with seventeen candles balanced on top.

Lily - at home, healthy, well.

And a picture of Greg on the wall.

The film went blank, before more footage of my thirteenth birthday party. Greg was there, my wonderful, amazing brother.

Dead.

Dying just hours after that film was made.

Other random pictures flashed up, me at various points over the last few years, precious glimpses into my short life.

A not always happy life, but a worthwhile one.

Tear poured down my face now, make-up more than smudged, as everything I had fought so hard to hide through my life came rushing back, filling my heaving, gasping body.

The misery. The happiness.

The newsroom returned, and the woman looked up.

"The Lee's are arguably the unluckiest family in politics since the Kennedy's. Since the Secretary of State Michael Lee ascended to the position in 2003, the family has suffered unparalleled grief. In 2002, at the age of just seventeen, the Lee's eldest, Greg Lee, died after taking a heroin overdose. Just a few months later, it is rumoured that a junior minister raped Miss Violet Lee. However this was never proven. And in October of last year (2008), Miss Lillian Lee was diagnosed with leukemia, and is currently undergoing chemotherapy at Great

Ormond Street Hospital for Children." The reporter finished, and I felt the blood drain from my head. Air wasn't reaching my lungs, and I was in so much pain.

"We now have a message from Lillian."

Lily, Lily - my beautiful sister Lily came up on the screen, and I could tell it was live. She lay in a hospital bed, tubes running from her nose, all sorts of wires attached to her wrists.

She was weak - very weak. She was paler than the parasites beside me, her cheeks taking a faint green tinge. Her eyes were sunken and bloodshot, and she looked so thin, so frail. She was totally bald, but it didn't matter. She was my beautiful little sister, whatever.

She looked so ill, but I knew that was the chemotherapy.

The only thing that could save her was the thing that would make her last months so miserable, so painful.

It was cruel.

TOO CRUEL.

I looked on.

I knew I may never see her after this.

Lily. Just thirteen.

Too young.

A microphone was placed under her mouth, and slowly, she began to rasp her words. I could tell it took so much effort. Too much.

"Violet... Violet. I... I know you're, out... there. Please... please... come, home." Silently she closed her eyes, a peaceful expression taking over her face.

The screen quickly changed back to the newsroom, and the anchor people, looking awkward, began explaining how to contact the police with information.

But I never heard any of that.

I was dying under the weight of my pain.

I cried uncontrollably, unable to breath. I felt a welcome darkness blanking out my world, forcing me to the ground.

And I passed out.

But not before I had taken one last breath. And with that last breath I screamed. A horrific, chilling, ear-splitting scream.

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R.I.P Paul.

You taught me how to survive.

R.I.P Grandad.

You taught me why I should never forget all those that die in service.

You taught me to have a passion for roses.

R.I.P Brett Hall.

Dartmouth's brave, brave soldier.

They took you too young.

---

Death is a blessing.

Death is like the night. We hide from it, postpone it as long as possible, shun the darkness, but in the end it is inevitable.

We fear it, but it will forever stalk our waking hours, haunt our most sinister nightmares.

Grief, perhaps, is worse.

Grief is what is left behind for the living to deal with.

It is what will make two enemies allies, what can make love turn to hate.

Grief is the most astonishing of pain, and we see it everyday, in some shape or form.

Maybe you just broke up with your beloved. Maybe you just lost a treasured possession. Or perhaps it the death of a loved one that you mourn for.

You realize that when you see an entire school mourning as one. It is cruel. Too cruel.

So, ladies and gentlemen, tonight, before you sleep, spare a thought for those suffering the aftermath of death.

For the family, friends, colleagues, teachers, comrades, enemies and acquaintances of those who have left us.

Spare a thought for those fighting in wars all over this far from peaceful world.

Spare a thought for those that died yesterday, that have died today, and for those who will die tomorrow.

Death is a horrific thing.

---

This chapter was dedicated to Trooper Brett Hall of 2nd Battalion The Royal Tank Regiment, who died on Wednesday 16th September 2009, after an explosion hit his Combat Logistic Patrol in rural north-west Helmand province. He was just twenty-one.

My thoughts and sympathies are with his family, and all those who shed a tear at school. There were many...

For The Fallen by Laurence Binyon

With proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children,

England mourns for her dead across the sea.

Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her spirit,

Fallen in the cause of the free.

Solemn the drums thrill; Death august and royal

Sings sorrow up into immortal spheres,

There is music in the midst of desolation

And a glory that shines upon our tears.

They went with songs to the battle, they were young,

Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.

They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted;

They fell with their faces to the foe.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:

Age shall not weary them, nor the years contemn.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning

We will remember them.

They mingle not with their laughing comrades again;

They sit no more at familiar tables of home;

They have no lot in our labour of the day-time;

They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires are and our hopes profound,

Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from sight,

To the innermost heart of their own land they are known

As the stars are known to the Night;

As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust,

Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain;

As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness,

To the end, to the end, they remain.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning, we will remember them.

Spare a thought...

Chapter 13

# Dinner with a vampire. Did I mention I'm vegetarian? (13)

Dinner with a vampire. Did I mention I'm vegetarian? (Chapter 13)

"You hold the answers deep within your own mind. Consciously, you've forgotten it. That's the way the human mind works. Whenever something is too unpleasant, too shameful for us

to entertain, we reject it. We erase it from our memories. But the answer is always there."

"You're not alone... never... never."

-Understanding by Evanescence

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=STd_ReduHMw (Understanding by Evanescence)

HYPERLINK "http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K3ORuIBjjBU" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K3ORuIBjjBU (Bring me to life by Evanescence)

Spare a thought...

"VIOLET! VIOLET! WAKE UP! WAKE UP NOW!"

My eyes flew open, and a horrendous blood-curdling scream escaped my lips.

The numbness that blackout brings was fast fading, grief returning.

I felt all sanity beginning to leave my heaving body, my soul feeling as though it was being ripped into a thousand shards. My heart slowed to an impossible beat, time following its slow march. My chest burned, as though my throat was alight.

I heard my horrendous scream piercing the grave like silence in the room, echoing in its own chilling way around the walls. But I didn't care to stop.

All hope was gone.

Lily was dead.

Lily had given her message, and died.

It wasn't fair! She couldn't go! I needed her! She couldn't go, I need her!

"But she had gone," a cruel voice said from deep within my mind.

My voice?

Or someone else's?

I don't care.

It hurt too much.

She hadn't gone.

I don't believe it.

I felt myself being lifted from the ground, and I returned from my grief-stricken conversation with myself. I realized I was sobbing, and felt cold arms wrap themselves around my fragile self.

Somebody gently cooed into my ear, stroking my hair, gently rocking me back and forth. I saw a flash of blonde hair, and recognized Fabian, as other cold

hands ran themselves across my back, tissues being passed, and occasional mumbles of;

"I'm so sorry"-

"It's okay, it's okay"-

Too weak to protest, I buried my head in his neck, sobbing, screaming, and blubbering for what must have been hours.

Lily. Not Lily too.

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Hours later, I resurfaced, numb, cold, heartless.

I felt like I had been brought to life once more. Born into a world where nothing is just, or even fair.

I think I would rather take the pain.

Numbness, sometimes, is worse than the pain. You can't feel anything. Not a thing. No pain, no hope, no happiness, no fear. Just nothing.

A cold, empty shell.

Can you really live your life like that? Can you really live a life devoid of meaning?

Is it possible to breathe with a blackened heart, a dying rose? Can you really survive forever under an eclipse?

Can I?

Could you?

It is not living. It is existing.

My head fell onto Fabian's frozen shoulder, and his arm gently snaked around my waist, pulling me into him. I was beyond tears, which I knew he would be glad of; his tee-shirt was damp, smudges of make-up staining the material. A thousand and one tissues lay in the bin nearby, and my nose was sore, my eyes red and puffy. I was exhausted, and my neck ached. My muscles were protesting; hating the contorted positions I had forced them into to escape the pain.

I could feel Fabian's breath on my hair, and for once I was truly glad he was here. I felt his icy lips brush the skin on my forehead, and I instinctively tensed up, waiting for sharp canines to pierce my skin. But they did not come.

Instead, he kissed my forehead, pulling me as far into him as possible.

"It'll be ok, I promise. I'll look after you," he whispered musically, and my heart skipped a beat. He was so beautiful... in so many ways.

For a moment, out of the corner of my eye, I thought I saw Lyla whirl around, eyes ablaze, fangs bared. She was tensed, ready to pounce, hungry for blood.

A picture of Lily formed once more in my mind, and a felt a lump form in my throat. Too soon, Lyla was forgotten, pushed from my mind as the pain threatened to return. Lyla was never thirsty anyway, I was probably imagining it, I could afford to forget.

"Big mistake," the voice that stalked my sub-conscious said.

You learn to ignore voices in your head.

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Hours later again, I woke up from a restless sleep, splayed out across Fabian, who was so relaxed he was in a state vampires thought of as sleep. They

were not asleep as such - all their senses were buzzing, and it took them just seconds to fully wake up. There eyes were closed, but their minds fully engaged. They could dream... sort of. It was like a waking dream I suppose.

They didn't need to 'sleep'. Not unless they were desperately thirsty. They just wanted to. Same as eating. They ate normal food at state occasions. Because they felt like it.

Weird huh?

I could tell you many more random facts. Ask me any question and I will answer it right now.

Anything to distract me from the pain of... of losing Lily.

Anything... I beg you.

Tears pricked my eyes, and I wrapped my arms around my chest, as if to hold myself together.

Anything... please!

Numbness can't last forever.

Fabian's eyes flew open, their entrancing blue revealed. He pulled me upright at once, and turned my head so my eyes met his. I immediately felt myself calming down, as I fell into their depthless colour.

"No more crying, okay? I won't let you cry anymore. She would not want you to be like this, would she? She would want you to be happy, right?" He looked at me intensely, concern etching his angular face into beautiful contortions.

Wordlessly I nodded. Without thinking, I was biting down hard on my tongue, preventing any sobs escaping. He nodded, his face losing a little of the worry.

I blinked, and they were all surrounding me, everyone one of them. The King, Lyla, Kaspar, Cain, Thyme, Fabian obviously, Charlie, Felix, Declan and two men I didn't recognise. Two beautiful women clung to their sides, a baby in the arms of one, child clinging to the other hand of the same women.

Both of the men and children all shared the same mesmerizing emerald eyes.

Sky and Jag.

The oldest of the Varn children.

The one with the family looked older, and I guessed he was Sky. The beautiful women I could only assume were their wives.

Scratch women.

Vampires.

And none of them looked a day older than twenty-two. Jag even younger!

Not bad considering Sky was two thousand years old.

One hundred years for every one year of ageing?

Yeah, well it turns out, according to Annie, it can take tens of thousands of years before a vampire truly looks as though they are ageing. They practically stop ageing.

They are just mentally a year older.

So they do age, but they don't generally show it.

Yeah, great info there Fabian. And FYI, you don't always look twenty. You could pass for eighteen any day. So ha, that proves the not ageing theory!

"Lily's dead..." The cruel voice in my head sung, and my attempt at distraction quickly became fraught. I fought back the tears. Again.

"Ahem." I looked up to see Kasper standing their, looking mortified. He held out something in his hand.

A mobile (cell phone).

My mouth slowly fell open. I reached out, and took it shakily. I hardly dared believe it.

"We... we didn't know," Kaspar said, something along the lines of remorse in his voice.

"Painful remembrance Violet," the voice in my head murmured.

"What?" I whispered urgently back, unaware I was having a conversation with a voice in my head. But it had fallen silent, and I was denied a reply.

"Go on, knock yourself out." Fabian said softly, a small smile on his lips. I looked down at the phone uncertain, not sure of whether I wanted to do this.

"Oh, but you want to, don't you?" The voice taunted.

Yes. Yes I did.

I got to my feet, stiff as a board, almost collapsing. I forced my legs to move, and slowly made my way across the whitewashed living room. As I reached the door, I felt cold breath on my neck.

"Remember we can hear every word you say," Kaspar hissed.

I just nodded.

I knew that. Too well.

I slammed the door behind me, and traipsed across to the stairs, where I sat down. I pushed my now-to-full fringe out of my eyes, sighing. I weighed the phone in my hand for a moment. This was going to hurt.

Shakily, I dialled my home number.

01926 676767

That number was branded into my mind, those seemingly meaningless eleven numbers my key to sanity.

One ring.

Two rings.

Three rings.

Please pick up.

Four rings.

Five rings.

Losing hope.

Six rings.

Seven rings.

Eight rings.

Don't go on answer phone, please.

Nine rings.

Ten rings.

Hanging up. I sighed, pulling the tiny mobile away from my ear-

"Hello?"

"Dad?" I breathed.

"Violet? Violet! Is that you?" An all too familiar voice called anxiously down the phone.

"Dad! Dad! It's me. Oh, dad I'm so sorry, I... I"-

I broke down in sobs unable to continue.

"You're alive! I don't believe it! Violet, oh my Violet, you're okay! And I'm so sorry, I never should have let you go out... I..." He began to break down, but I knew it wouldn't last. "I am just glad you are alive." I could just see his eyes glazing over, becoming business like. I knew my dad.

"Listen darling, I am going to put your mother on, I need to talk to the police."

"What? Wait dad - police? What?!? Why do you"-

Without hesitation or even an 'I love you,' my mother was passed on.

"VIOLET! OH MY DARLING VIOLET, YOU'RE OKAY! YOU'RE ALIVE! I LOVE YOU!!!" my mother screamed

down the phone, so loudly I had to hold the mobile an arms length away.

"Mum, mum what does dad mean... talking to the police? What's going on? Shouldn't you be at the hosp"-

My mother carried on as though she couldn't hear me.

"Oh darling, wait till Lily hears, oh she has missed you so much!"

"What do you mean - Lily? Isn't she... hasn't she... you know... didn't she die?" I managed to choke out, more than confused.

"Die? What are you on about darling? She is perfectly alive, just a little ill after the chemotherapy. She is in hospital, I'm just down the ward from her now. They let you use mobiles in hospitals now, how wonderful is that? In fact, I will go and tell her the news now. She was so upset about you - very stressed. Doesn't help her really. She sent you a message on the news you know. Bless her, she was so tired, she fell asleep

right after. Die! Pfft! She is a Lee you know, we are stronger than that! Of course she hasn't died!"

That took a full minute to sink in.

Her eyes closing. She was tired. Stronger than that. Even Greg had put up a fight right until the end. She wasn't...

"WHAT DO YOU MEAN SHE ISN'T DEAD?!?" I screamed down the phone, tears of realization running down my cheeks.

**********

That scream would forever haunt my nightmares. Or whatever we had instead.

I would never forget how her body contorted and writhed on the floor, as though she were in physical pain.

I would never be able to rid my mind of seeing those violet eyes fly open, as pain and consciousness returned to her.

And I will always treasure the smell of her salty tears falling as she passed out.

Because I know how that feels. I know how that sorrow can weigh a thousand tonnes on your shoulders.

And frankly, it's shit.

I listened silently, as did the rest of my family and friends, to her antagonizing thoughts as the phone rang.

I knew Fabian cared for her. I don't know in what way. Or even why. But he did.

I knew little Thyme thought of her as the thoughtful older sister Lyla never was.

I knew Lyla was fond of her, glad of the female company.

I know the guys envisioned her as the sexy mortal.

And I saw her as the prey I couldn't hunt.

And we all knew that having her around was dangerous.

I felt her break down as her father answered the phone. A universal throb of anger circulated the

room, and I felt it pass through me, my blood boiling in an instant.

Michael Lee.

The cause of so many of our troubles.

But it was quickly replaced by something different.

Pity?

Violet's shame at what she thought she had let happen.

What she thought she could blame on herself to ease other's pain.

I felt sorry for her.

A mortal!

I, Prince Kaspar James Vladimir Eztli Varn, heir to the Vamperic throne of the one hundred and twelfth reign, was feeling empathy.

Empathy!

Was this a new me or something?

I felt a cataclysmic shift in my mind. Like I was straining to remember something long forgotten.

Remembering...?

A new me?

Or was it my old self?

Chapter 14

# Dinner with a vampire. Did I mention I'm vegetarian? (14)

Dinner with a vampire. Did I mention I'm vegetarian? (Chapter 14)

"A son is an extension of the father - he see's him as his future, the flesh he shall forever live on in..."

Sorry it is quite a short one guys, but I wanted to get it uploaded tonight, before I forgot all the ideas =)

And it was quite a good place to end it! Thank you to everyone for commenting, voting and fanning? =S Keep it up, its almost as good as writing itself =D

So, enjoy!

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZyLx0qc_gKc (Map of the Problematique by Muse)

HYPERLINK "http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n-264VgAdn8" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n-264VgAdn8 (Who knew? By Pink)

HYPERLINK "http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OhjsFWPXG2o" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OhjsFWPXG2o (Ignorance by Paramore)

"WHAT DO YOU MEAN SHE ISN'T DEAD?!?"

Her voice echoed around the room, and my eyes snapped up. I met Fabian's cold gaze, and both our mouths fell open.

Her sister was not dead.

That meant...

I fled from the room, snatching the phone from her hands, stopping only long enough to meet her tear stained eyes.

Without another word, I flitted back to the living room, and held the phone up to my ear.

"Prince Kaspar, so nice to talk to you again. I trust you are keeping well?"

Michael Lee's voice sneered down the phone. My lips rolled back over my gums. Mortal bastard.

"Cut the crap human, down to business. We have your daughter, you know that." I hissed back, blood boiling.

I didn't hate this guy, I loathed him.

"Of course I know that bloodsucker, otherwise I would have sent a full scale search party out by now. Now why don't you just put your father on, and we can discuss business. A son should not be doing his father's dirty work," he said, his voice losing its cool edge.

"Any business of my father's is mine too. So you can deal with me. Do you have a problem with that?" I questioned, my words venomous.

"Of course not, 'Your Highness.'" He used the same mocking tone as Violet, I thought. But I ignored his comment, and carried on.

"Okay, here's the deal. Your daughter will remain here as hostage of the Vamperic Kingdom, until she consents to be turned. End of." It was clean cut, simple yet effective blackmail.

I could almost hear the human's mind ticking away, evaluating the situation, choosing his next set of poisonous words.

"Oh, I don't think that is possible. You see, I have contacts with some of the best hunter-trackers and slayers there are. I think you may know one of them. Jean-Pierre? I am quite sure you know him," his stupid arrogant voice was twisted with amusement.

Jean-Pierre?

Yeah, I knew him alright.

"Oh, and I do believe you killed his son a few weeks back, in a certain incident in London? Trafalgar Square was it? Well, as you can imagine, he is not happy. I'm sure he could manage the murder of another one of your family members." Lee said.

My blood boiled, and anger gushed through my veins. Nobody said that.

"You know full well that a human can not set a foot upon these grounds. Even a slayer. So don't bother trying. And in case you haven't noticed, we have not broken any of the ridiculous rules you enforce upon us. But you have broken ours a thousand times, so we are perfectly within our rights to do as we please!"

Silence down the line.

The whole room was staring at me intently, listening, waiting for my next move. I felt their eyes on my back, my father's expectant gaze the most prominent.

Tick, tick went the human mind.

"Perhaps, but I will get her back Varn. Get her back human. We will attack when you least expect it, crushing you and your evil dominion! Your kind's unnatural ways! Everything! Leaving humanity safe at last!" He squawked, his voice becoming increasingly hoarse.

"I could say the same for humanity, but I don't. It is a shame, you know. There was a time when I thought our two species would have been able to live

harmoniously, but you and your government seemed to have crushed all hope of that," I sighed, remembering. We had been so close... "Perhaps, one day, you will realize you are being spoon fed by the most evil of slayers. But until that day, I can only remind you of what we are, and what we can do."

"If you hurt her Varn, I'm warning you, if you take even one drop of her precious blood, I will have your kind hunted down until you are nothing more than extinct!!!" he threatened. But his words washed over me like the purest of mountain water.

I closed my eyes in painful remembrance. It hurt to think that the efforts were all in vain...

How we had been so close. And how now, all hopes and dreams of peace had been shattered by one family - and their spoon fed superiors. Shattered forever.

---

If only they all knew how very wrong they were.

Nothing is forever.

I looked up as soon as I heard footsteps in the hall. Kaspar was walking preoccupied towards me, his face world-weary.

"Your father wants to talk to you again." He handed me the phone.

"Hello?"

"Violet, listen to me. I want you to tell me the truth, okay? Have they hurt you? Have they hurt you in any way? Tell me!" He demanded. I was so surprised at his abruptness, that I started back.

"Violet, have they taken any blood from you?"

I thought for a moment.

"No... No they haven't. I'm fine dad, really." I replied, scarcely believing the lies pouring from my mouth.

Kaspar started up, turning to stare at me in disbelief, his eyes full of puzzlement. I heard unrest in the other room, and knew they were listening to the lie as well.

"You just told a lie to your own father to defend a bunch of vampires?!? Hello, girly?" my sub-conscious voice exclaimed in disbelief. Haha, my voice of reason.

"Well, don't let them Violet. Don't take anything either, in case it is their blood - that will turn you. And listen to me Violet. Do not consent to becoming one of them, we will get you out of there before you ever have to do that. I am not having any of my daughters becoming some inferior parasite! You might have to wait though, Be patient! Do you hear me? Violet?" He said urgently.

"What do you mean, we?" I asked, confused.

This was all too much. I had only just got over the fact my sister wasn't dead. I couldn't process more stupidly confusing information.

"Violet, just promise me you won't turn. Do not give in to them. Ignore their power. Just promise me?" my father was coming as close to pleading as he could get, and for him, that was low.

I ran a clammy hand through my tangled hair. I felt a sort of doomed resignation, like I was signing my own execution papers or something. Instinct screamed at me not to promise anything.

"I... I promise."

Chapter 15

# Dinner with a vampire. Did I mention I'm vegetarian? (15)

Dinner with a vampire. Did I mention I'm vegetarian? (Chapter 15)

Time lapses rock my fluffy socks. And you have to listen to the song below. I know, the links are messed up, but just type the song names in on youtube.com =)

And sorry for any spelling mistakes, grammatical errors etc. Hasn't been proof read =S

But it is a long one, so YAY!

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-EuebA3L18 (Twilight by Vanessa Carlton - now officially Violet's song! =) Just listen to the lyrics!)

HYPERLINK "http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5lCIza53GbY&feature=related"

(Sanctitatis by Future of Forestry)

Hours merged to days, days to weeks.

Everyday was as insignificant as the next, time passing in a vexing blur, nothing standing out.

I spent almost all my time cooped up in my room, amusing myself as best I could. It had been a week exactly since that fateful phone call, and it still troubled my thoughts. I had hoped that I may be able to call my family again, but had quickly given up hope. Nobody talked to me, apart from the occasional, brief exchange. Fabian attempted conversation, but I pushed him away.

I couldn't get too close.

I was not naïve. I knew what would happen when I got out of here. What would happen to them.

I'm sure the stakes those men carried back in Trafalgar square weren't for show.

I hadn't heard much of Kaspar's conversation with my father, but I heard enough. My father would send slayers, or hunters - whatever. Some powerful slayer by the sound of it.

We all know what happens when slayers come along.

You don't need to watch Buffy.

I sighed, and looked back down at my drawing. I wasn't much of an artist, I had only just scraped an A at GCSE, but hadn't bothered to carry on to A-level. I had absentmindedly began sketching a pair of eyes. They were narrow, wise, and stealthy. A predators eyes, and I instinctively knew they should be emerald green.

Next to them, I had begun the outlining of another pair of eyes... these round, understanding... blue, like the sky on the clearest day.

A third pair, oval, defined... chocolate brown.

And one last pair, narrow but angular, violet.

I stopped, hesitantly, and looked at what I had drawn.

Holy crap.

I ripped the paper in two, and threw it far under my bed. It could go and have fun with the spiders.

I let out an involuntary shiver. This place was sending me loopy. I had to get out of here. Not that looked like it was going to happen anytime soon.

And it was my birthday in thirteen days.

Turning eighteen a hostage... what fun.

I contemplated whether I should play a little on the piano, when there was a brisk knock on my door. Assuming it was Fabian, I didn't bother to get up, and instead called;

"Come in!"

I heard the handle turn, but kept staring at my feet, feeling sorry for myself. Stupid vampires.

"Violet."

I looked up. That wasn't Fabian's voice, it was far too stern. And indeed, it was not Fabian. It was Sky.

"Oh damn," I thought, wishing I had changed into something a little more flattering. I was wearing an oversized tee shirt, a hoodie pulled over the top, along with a pair of torn boyfriend jeans, with fluffy bed socks as well.

"Looking sexy gal!" The voice in my head laughed, sounding like an oversized pig on laughing gas.

"Hey, that was uncalled for!" the voice chimed back, faking hurt. Ok, voice was getting annoying now.

Sky must have seen the weird expression on my face, for he gaze me a quizzical look, before clearing his throat.

"You need to come downstairs," he said.

I wondered why, but nodded. I saw his eyes glide up and down my body, taking in my attire. Vampires had a habit of doing that. I blushed, and suddenly felt very self-conscious.

"I'll be down in two minutes," I gushed, dumping up from the bed.

"Okay, but don't be long," he replied.

I was already in the wardrobe when I heard the bedroom door close as he left. I grabbed some jeans off the rail, and a flower-print off-the-shoulder top. I changed quickly, and roughly pulled a comb through my hair. Glancing in the mirror, I was satisfied. I almost made myself smile, as a thought passed through my mind. Two weeks ago, and I wouldn't have been seen dead without make-up on. Now, it was just normal. I guess I knew that lip-gloss was not going to make me anywhere near as pretty as a vampire.

Argh! Life wasn't fair.

I left the room, still wondering what the great urgency was. I had never been requested to be 'seen' in the fifteen days I had been here. My mind wandered, and I thought of Sky.

He was the eldest of the Varn children, but he was not the heir to the throne. No... Kaspar was. I also knew that Sky was a thousand years old exactly, and that his wife was called Arabella, and that she was nine hundred years old.

Arabella. That name rang a bell for some reason.

I could tell Sky was the one in charge, keeping the rest in line. Although from what I knew, he didn't visit often, living most of the year in Transylvania, the ancestral home of the vampire royal family - until three hundred years ago, when they had been driven out by slayers - the Pierre clan.

(Look, I stole a book from their library - I was bored.)

I guess he was like a father figure to the others, filling in the void the King created. But Sky was a father himself - to Muriel, three, and Emeline, just three months old. From the gossip I had heard, he was very young to have children, the King was fifty-nine thousand years old before Sky had been born.

Jag, the second eldest was seven hundred, but didn't act it. He was young at heart, easygoing, and very likable, much as I wanted to despise him. And the woman with him (Mary) was not his wife, but instead his partner of two hundred years!

Cute huh?

So, enough of Vamperic history, as I was wrenched back to now, as an apprehensive Fabian appeared

from the shadows, thrusting a mug of steaming tea into my hands. I looked down at it, suspicious, but before I could say anymore, he had gone, flitting down the stairs.

I walked down, gazing around. Every inhabitant of the household were gathered around, small rucksacks dotted about the floor. They all wore thick black travelling cloaks, even Thyme and Muriel. I noticed that Arabella was carrying Emeline in a harness strapped to her back. The servants were rushing about, passing various objects around, before hastily bowing and darting off to their next task. I spotted Margaret, who gave me the tinniest of smiles.

The only one not in a flat panic was Fabian, who I also noticed was wearing normal clothes. I narrowed my eyes, and called out over the bustle:

"Family vacation is it?"

Arabella was the first to look up. She, for some reason, was increasingly wary of me. Her eyes met mine, and her lips turned into a thin line. It was not

dislike... no, just... I don't know, like she knew something no one else did, not even me.

Other eyes followed, until everyone in the room was looking at me. (I was getting way too used to this).

"No, it's a hunt," the King replied bluntly. I was taken aback; he had not addressed me directly for a while, not since the little incident with the whore. Aka Charity. Kaspar's gaze snapped up to meet mine, his eyes full of fury and anger.

I was tempted to roll my eyes at him, but knew better.

"Hunting?" I quizzed.

"Yes, hunting." Kaspar replied, relishing this.

"Hunting for what?"

A few glances were exchanged.

"Animals, and erm... humans," Jag said.

Ah.

I see what the tea was for now. Soften me up to the truth.

My lips pursed, and I gagged a little. That terrible night... Trafalgar Square... all that blood. And now they would do it again.

I looked down at the floor, awkward. I would rather they took my blood than go hunting, bottle it up, or whatever they do.

"Maybe that has already happened," my voice said.

"What?" I asked urgently back, but too late, the voice fell silent. It was so infuriating sometimes.

Stupid voice. Stupid vampires.

I slowly walked down the stairs, experimentally taking a sip of my tea. I nearly gagged on that too, whoever had make it forgot to put the sugar in!

YUCK!

Okay, yeah, I have three lumps of sugar in my tea. So?

"So, what is with the backpacks then? You going for long?" I could hardly believe it. Did this mean I would be vampire free for a while?

"For the weekend, we will be back on Monday," Jag explained, his cute face wrinkling as he smiled. I forced myself not to smile back. It was hard.

"But don't get any ideas girly, you aren't here alone," Kaspar sneered. I knew my face had drooped a little, and my heart sank. He smirked seeing my crestfallen face. "Fabian is babysitting you."

My mouth fell open, and I looked from Kaspar to Fabian and back.

"BABYSITTING? I don't need babysitting! I'm seventeen for Christ's sake!" I said. A snigger came from Charlie, but I gave him most my most evil glare and he quickly shut up.

"Seventeen. And here I was, sure you had the mental age of a two year old. Silly me," Kaspar smirked. Argh, jerk! "Oh, and that reminds me, we are 'picking' up your stuff sometime this weekend, so is there anything you want apart from the... erm, obvious?"

Hehe, almost two hundred years old, and still embarrassed about girl stuff.

I thought for a moment. Was there anything I wanted? Yes - there was.

"My iPod. And... And," my voice dropped lower. "...My teddy bear." I said that so quietly any normal species never would have heard it.

But you cannot define a vampire as normal, can you?

Sniggers erupted around the room, coming mainly from the men. I felt my cheeks go warm, and knew I must be the colour of a beet right now. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw the two little girl's beaming smiles.

Well, at least they understood soft toys.

Kaspar was gasping for breath between raucous laughs, and I felt the temptation to slap him. But of course, I didn't.

"You..." Gasp. "Do need..." Gasp. "Babysitting." Gasp. "You are a two..." Gasp. "Year old!"

"Well, I'm sure you had a teddy! So you can't talk!" I huffed defensively.

The room erupted once more, as shouts of "Yeah, you did Kaspar, remember?" bounced off the walls, most of them coming from Cain, who was relishing the chance to get back at his brother.

"Shut up Cain! And no I didn't!" Kaspar said, roughly pushing Cain, who tripped over a bag. He back flipped over though, and in less than a second was on his feet. He walked over to Kaspar; fist clenched, as though to punch him, but then swiftly kneed him where the sun doesn't shine.

Kaspar doubled over, clenching himself, moaning all the while.

"Bastard!" he managed to grunt.

DING, DING! And it's 1-0 to Cain! Nice to know they had there family arguments.

I watched calmly, sipping my disgusting cold tea. Cain was now flying across the room, fifteen foot in the air, before hitting the marble wall. Ouch.

"ENOUGH!" the King shouted. Both boys immediately straightened up. It was so terrifying... so awesome to watch the power he exerted over them.

"We are leaving," the King said. It was not a statement, but an order. Everyone gathered up their packs, pulling their cloaks tighter around themselves. As Kaspar did so, I caught sight of a loose, white linen shirt, hidden under the folds of his cloak. Emblazoned on the breast was a tiny coat of arms - the royal coat of arms.

A black rose, dripping with blood, a large V below.

Kaspar had a necklace like it too, I had seen him wearing it.

The King was first to stride forward, and as he did so, the butlers rushed foreword, swinging both of the two enormous front doors open. He swaggered down them, and one by one, they all filtered after him.

Kaspar turned to Fabian.

"Do not let her out of your sight." Kaspar glanced at me. "It could mean trouble for the whole kingdom."

"I am perfectly capable of looking after a human, Kaspar," Fabian replied. I sensed hostility in the air, and kept my eyes to the floor.

"Perhaps," Kaspar replied. I looked, shocked to see Kaspar's face blank, as though he were talking to a complete stranger, not his best friend.

Something had happened here.

Kaspar turned on his heel, walking away without another word. I rushed foreword, grabbing Kaspar's wrist. He whipped around, staring at me with his heartless eyes.

"Please don't kill anyone," I whispered.

I thought I saw his eyes soften for a moment. But he tore his wrist from my grip, like I was no more than a child, which I realized I must be to him.

A child.

He walked down the steps, after the others, who were already walking across the grounds towards the forest.

He stopped as he reached the lawns, turning back towards Fabian and me as we stood watching from the open doorway, inhaling the first fresh air in weeks.

His eyes rose from the floor to meet mine. He held that gaze for a moment, before he pulled the hood of his cloak over his head, casting all into shadow, save for his glistening emerald eyes.

His dark figure lingered for a moment longer, until he swept around, stalking off, into the breathtaking sunset that had bathed the world in pale gold. As he reached the other black-cloaked figures, they all sped up, becoming a dark blur on the landscape.

Running into the falling sun, all as beautiful as the first time I had set eyes upon their kind.

- - - - - - - - - - - - - -

Fabian turned to me, minutes after we had watched the dangerous procession retreat into the distance, a small smile forming on his perfectly kissable lips.

"Well, what do you say to having a bit of a party?" he asked, a cheeky grin now forming.

I looked at him, trying to be scornful, trying to be cold towards him, but failing... big time. Everything about him just made me want to like him, from his

kindness, to his sky blue eyes, to his muscled chest and that cheeky smile.

Sheesh, that smile...

I found my heart beating a little faster as I caught his scent. No, not cologne. I guess it was some scent, designed to lure people in... just like in all the books.

My heart still danced the tango though.

"Well...?" Fabian said, snapping me back to reality.

"Oh, well, go on then. What type of party?" I asked.

"Well, I was thinking me and you hit the games room, raid the DVD collection. And does pizza sound good?" he said, in one breath, excitement making his eyes shine.

"Hell yeah! And you like pizza?" I replied, equally as excited. Pizza... yum!

"It is like the only human food I like. Anyway, I will be right back, I'm going to go and tell the kitchens to get pizza making!" he said, walking away. "Don't try anything funny!" He added, rolling his eyes.

"No need to go tell the kitchens," I replied. "We'll make our own!"

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It had seemed like a great idea at the time.

A bit of pizza making, use up the food stored pointlessly in the Varn's kitchen, and stop the servants having to work. "Yes, brilliant idea Violet," I had thought.

Note to self and all other potential kidnappee's: NEVER, EVER TRY AND TEACH A VAMPIRE TO COOK!

It does not work.

In the end I had given up trying to teach Fabian how to use a rolling pin, so had instead assigned him washing up duty. He just about managed that.

But, two and a half hours later, we had prepared, cooked, and munched our way through three pizzas, as well as two bottles of coke (my little addiction - the drink variety that is!)

We lounged about, too lazy to really do anything, until eventually, Fabian had dragged me to watch a

film. It obviously hadn't made much of an impression on me, for I couldn't tell you what happened, or even the name! Bored, I had challenged him to a game of Guitar Hero. Misery Business by Paramore.

I won.

Girl power!

That was hours ago, and the sun had sunk far below the horizon, the moon taking its place. A few stars glittered in the sky, and far off, miles away, I could see the orange glow of a town - which one I couldn't tell you. The grandfather clock ticked in the background, both it's hands inching around, both aiming to point straight up.

I watched the moon, realizing it was full. A strange feeling passed through me, chilling me, sending a kind of unsettling emotion pulsating through my body.

Realization.

"There is far more to this world than human's think, isn't there?" I asked, turning to face Fabian from my window seat.

His face was framed by the dancing fire, which roared in the hearth. It was eerie, watching the orange flames light up his pale skin, lapping at it as though it longed to burn his unnatural presence away. One side was coated in shadow however, constantly reminding me of his darker, more primal side.

"Far more."

I fought to keep hold of the unnatural feeling that gave me the insight I longed for.

"This is just one Royal Family of many," he continued. "But you do not wish to know more. Ignorance is a blessing humanity will never know of. Treasure it."

I nodded. He was right. Ignorance of the horrors of this world really was sacred. This insight told me there were things... out there that were just as terrifying as the creature stood before me. Just as seductive. Just as powerful. And all were secret, all lived in harmony.

Just to protect themselves from humans.

And the atrocities we committed.

Maybe we were the true horror that stalked this Earth?

All of this, it was all around us, we were just too proud, too blind to notice, and that would forevermore be exploited.

I don't know. I didn't want to know. I looked up at the night sky, and all its wondrous beauty. I looked to the pallid full moon, to the fireflies hovering uncertainly above the pond. I saw the magic that pranced about the flowers, to the dark forest that would hide a thousand creatures, as I had found out that first day.

Yes, there was more out there...

I shook my head, sending the terrible truth far away. Vampires were enough to deal with.

More minutes passed in silence, I happy to muse from my window seat, Fabian respecting that. Not long later though, I was roused from my thought by twelve resounding rings.

Midnight.

I allowed a little shiver, feeling uneasy. Legend after legend told us that midnight was NOT the time to be around a mythical creature. It was the time where are worst nightmares took place.

Ridiculous as it was, I was scared. Scared that Fabian would suddenly jump up and suck my blood or something.

I took a quick look at Fabian, who, unsurprisingly, was still sat in his fireside chair, unmoving, eerily still as usual. A few candles were lit in the brackets on the walls, but other than that, the only source of light was the blazing fire. It had only been lit after I had complained of the constant coldness in the mansion. The vampires, of course, could never feel it, being sub-zero themselves.

Fabian looked up to see me staring at him, (I had extended my fleeting look!), and he smiled. He gestured for me to come and sit opposite him, and I got up groggily, tiredness beginning to engulf me. I took one last look at the moon, and sat down, my back to the window.

Although I was tired, a thousand and one questions buzzed around my brain, like flies around a corpse.

Remember weeks ago, when I was helping Lyla tidy her room? And I had many questions, but had vowed to only ask them tactfully? Well, there was never a more tactful time than now. I would ask Fabian, the closest thing I had to a friend here. The only one I could come close to trusting here, the only one I could entrust with a question.

It didn't take long to choose a question. This one thought had plagued my mind for days now. I was surprised it had not occurred to me before... it was so obvious.

And I was pretty sure, that if I had had no reason to ask this question, my time here would have been very different.

"Fabian?"

He looked up, by now used to my quizzing. He waited patiently, as I gathered the courage to ask this one question.

I took a deep breath, almost dreading the answer, as if my mind was telling me I didn't want to know the answer. It was a feeling I was becoming accustomed to.

"What... what, happened to the Queen?"

Kaspar's mother.

Never there.

A mother to six children, a wife, a Queen.

Never spoken of.

An important figure within the Varn family.

And not a word.

I instantly regretted asking, because whatever it was, it had stirred some deep, forgotten emotions in him.

His blue eyes flashed to black, and then to grey, where they remained. There were pitiless, lost of all the life they usually contained. His lips pursed into a thin line, and a few lines creased his brow. He seemed to back into the chair a little, and I saw his hands clench tighter around the armrests. His breath quickened, his chest rising and falling at an

incredible pace. If colour could drain from his face, it would. His ashen skin seemed to wither, die.

"I... I'm sorry, I shouldn't have asked," I stammered. He didn't move, his eyes wide and glazed over.

"Wide in remembrance," my voice said its voice unusually sombre.

"Go away!" I screamed back in my head, hating its stupid bad timing, it's constant need to interrupt my thoughts!

"Fabian? Are you okay?" I asked urgently, getting worried. He still hadn't moved, and pain covered his face. He looked back up at me, but not seeing me.

"Fabian?!" I almost yelled.

He head snapped up, and the greyness in his eyes seemed to melt away, returning to their usual sky blue. His stiff body loosened, and he sank back into the chair, slowly running a hand down the back of his head.

"I'm sorry... but when you know someone that long... you..." he trailed off, seeming to fall into his misery once more.

His head snapped back up.

"I will tell you; on the condition you never speak a word of it to anyone but me."

I paused for a moment. Tough condition, but curiosity got the better of me.

"I won't say a thing." He nodded, seeming satisfied.

"I will start from the very beginning. It is quite a long story, so prepare yourself..."

I shifted a little, trying to make myself as comfortable as possible, never taking my eyes off his saddened face.

"Vampires have been around for millions of years, roaming this earth millennia before humans had even been thought of. Nobody knows how we came about. There are no theories. But we were a peaceful species, and for many centuries, we lived alongside nature without any conflict. We lived off the blood of

any animal we could lay hands on, and they in turn respected us as the ultimate predator. We were primitive - but still far more advanced that any other animal at the time."

He paused for a moment, thinking.

"If the theory of evolution is indeed correct, then about 2 million years ago, the first ape type creatures appeared, and for the first time, the vampires met creatures similar to themselves. But, vampires treated them like any other creature - they continued to hunt these new creatures. But it all changed when Homo Sapiens arrived."

He stopped, looking me in the eye. Homo Sapiens. Us.

"These creatures were clever, resourceful, and most importantly, had learnt how to adapt. For the first time ever, vampires had met their match. But they continued to hunt them as they had done with every other animal, and quickly developed a taste for their blood. Within just a couple of centuries, the only acceptable blood was Homo Sapiens, the only blood that would quench our thirst. Most vampires still hunted animals, but it wasn't the same. The vampires

hunted them relentlessly, almost to extinction. But what our ancestors didn't realize is that they were creating a situation that would cause problems forever more."

He stopped once more, allowing that to sink in.

"How do you know all of this?" I asked.

"Like I said, the oldest vampire is 500,000 years old. He remembers all of this," he replied, before carrying on. "The early humans quickly learnt to fear these bloodthirsty creatures, even despise them. They fought back, and very quickly, the vampires realized their mistake. The most powerful vampire clan at the time ordered all vampires to go into recluse. They were told to try and not kill a human when they fed, and to hunt at night wherever possible. It was a drastic last minute attempt - to prevent the destruction of both species. This powerful family continued to govern our species, creating what was, by definition, the first government. But they became extremely revered, and in turn, became the first royal family. That family were the Varns. This was roughly 200,000 thousand years ago."

I nodded. That made sense. But... "I don't get what this has to do with... the Queen?"

"It will all make sense in a moment, but let me finish. This information is crucial."

I nodded again. I was turning into a noddy dog.

"Humanity was growing, and fast. Forced by circumstance, and the human's relentless hunting, the Varns fled to Romania - what is modern day Transylvania. The vampires - only a few hundred left by this point, followed them. They hid in the mountains, ruling from there. They took advantage of the unsuspecting people of Eastern Europe, at that time unaware of the threat living in their lands. Discovering they could turn humans, King Vladimir, the first king - Kaspar's great, great, great grandfather, ordered a mass turning. Thousands became vampires in just one night. Stronger, more confident, they branched out."

He paused for a breath, which I realized, he hadn't been taking. I shifted a little.

"But the old rules still stood, and no vampire would dare hunt during the day, most rarely went out into the daylight. Unseen, the vampires were gradually forgotten, and stories told by fathers to sons turned into myths, legends. Vampires graced by the old, original ways, became the top predator on earth. No other creature lived as long, or possessed the same qualities, not even the"- he stopped quickly, seeing my panicked eyes, which were screaming at him not to tell me about what else was out there.

He continued on, wearily. "But there were always those who never forgot. Those who refused to stop believing. These are the humans that became the hunters, the slayers, and they vowed to protect humanity, to take revenge on vampires for their ruthless hunting, hundreds of thousands of years before. Indeed, they managed to drive most of the vampires from Transylvania about three hundred years ago. Most settled here, in England instead. A lot went to the America's too, in search of the wealth it promised. Not that most of the vampires needed it," he muttered.

"King Vladimir, the current King is 60,000 years old, but he didn't become King until 10,000 years ago. When he was much younger, and just a prince, about 10,000 years old, he met a young vampire who lived in what is now Spain. She was called Carmen Eztli, and to him she was the most beautiful thing he had ever set eyes upon. They fell in love almost instantly, but vampire rules dictate that you must court for at least four hundred years before marrying. But, with his father's blessing, they married after just one hundred. This was long before humans had ever considered marriage."

Fabian smiled, his eyes glazed over, obviously thinking of some amusing memory.

"The match was perfect though, and when Prince Vladimir turned 50,000 years old, he was crowned as King, and alongside his Queen, Carmen, they ruled for almost ten thousand years, and it was perhaps the most peaceful of the fives reigns of the Vamperic kingdom. They had six children together, six amazing children..."

I smiled, Fabian's happiness at the thought of his monarch contagious.

"The Queen was truly the most beautiful women you would ever set eyes upon, in mind and body. She had long, dark hair that flowed to her waist and snowy white skin that glowed in the moonlight. She was a happy, bubbly person, who always craved peace... the antidote to the King's often-pessimistic approach to life. But it was her eyes... her eyes that made her so stunning. They were an emerald green, finer than any jewel I had ever seen. They were... intoxicating. How they would light up when she saw you, how she would smile... she was like a second mother to me." I knew now that he was not talking to me, more remembering aloud.

I smiled at the thought of her, Fabian's poetic words stimulating my overactive imagination. A perfect picture had formed in my head, and I could almost hear her laugh echoing in my head. We fell silent for about five minutes, and I knew Fabian was lost in his memories. But soon he returned, prepared to carry on with the rest of the story.

"About four years ago, not long after Thyme was born, a new human government came into power. They were more sympathetic to our cause, and the Queen, seeing an opportunity, quickly sought the passing of a new treaty, to replace the old, outdated one. After eighteen months, the government agreed, on the condition that their allies - the Pierre clan, would sign it."

I sensed the story was reaching its peak, and tensed.

"She sought a meeting with a certain Jean-Pierre, the leader of the clan." He said that name with more bitterness, more loathing than I thought possible.

"She took the original copy of the treaty with her, seeking to start discussion, not come to an immediate decision. She went to their ancestral home in Romania, and before she could even... even present it to them... they had leapt on her..." He was choking up, sobs escaping his lips but no tears falling. I frowned, not understanding why... why he was crying... crying without tears... tears that could only fall once a year, and no more.

"They leapt on her, and pushed a stake through her heart!"

My hands flew to my mouth, and I took in a sharp breath.

She was dead.

That was why there was no Queen.

I felt something wet drop into my lap, and astonished, found tears falling from my eyes.

"They murdered her, just because she sought peace! Murdered her in cold blood!" Fabian yelled, more dry sobs escaping.

I glided to his side, hardly knowing what I was doing. I just knew I had to comfort him. I sat down in his quivering lap, and pulled his head onto my shoulder, gently stroking his hair.

"I'm so sorry," I whispered. "I didn't know." Slowly, he seemed to recover, until his sobs faded into nothing.

"It's okay," he murmured back, "you couldn't have known." He pulled me further into him, and I happily sat there, sharing his grief, eager to take his pain

away. I leant my head against his shoulder, and he gently rocked me, whilst I gripped him tighter, both mourning the grief of loved ones passed. Greg's drug tainted look in death still haunted me.

After a while, Fabian spoke softly.

"It was two-and-a-half years ago now. It ruined us. The whole kingdom. She was so loved, a little like your Princess Diana. 35,000 vampires and humans went to her funeral. It was the worst day of my life. So many people cried, and the vampires that couldn't just stood there, numb. It was awful Violet. Too awful... I'm used to people dying, it happens when you are two hundred years old, but this... this was different. It was like I had lost a part of me, like half my heart had died or something."

I nodded, knowing the exact feeling.

"Afterwards, everything changed. Nobody was ever the same. The King, he moved out of the main bedroom, and Kaspar had it instead. He never smiles anymore, and locks himself up in his study most of the time. He hates royal events, and he will avoid

them as much as he can. He died along with his wife."

His eyes filled with more remorse, more pain, more regret.

"There were mass killings. Ever noticed that? Two and a half years ago, there were more murders worldwide than there had ever been! It was vampires, hitting back at humanity for stealing their precious Queen!"

My eyes went wide. The newspaper article, comparing Trafalgar Square to the Kent Bloodsuckers incident. That was two and a half years ago! Was that? Could it have been...?

"And Kaspar. He took it hard. Harder than the rest of us. He was so close to his mother. But it wasn't just that. The death of his mother means there will never be a seventh child."

I frowned, confused. He caught my expression, and explained. I could feel his mind wavering in and out of mine, seeking the solace of my thoughts, which

even though were pained, I knew must be nothing compared to his.

"Only the fourth of seventh child of the monarch becomes heir. They choose the child they see as most fit for becoming the next King or Queen." He was running a hand through his hair, and I felt the other clench into a fist. "Kaspar despises power. He never wanted to become King. Never. He always bargained on his parents having another child, and taking the burden away from him. His mother's death took away all hope of that."

His eyes flashed a black-grey once more, and his grip around me became unbearably tight. I let out a little whine, as my rib cage felt like it was being crushed. He quickly loosened his grip, but his fists remained clenched.

"His grief, and his becoming of the heir, it changed him. He turned into this bitter, grieving, cruel beast. He isn't the Kaspar I used to consider as good as a brother anymore, the happy, laughing friend I would spend weekends hunting with. Sure he was a womanizer, even then, a bit of a rebel, but nothing

compared to this. Now he uses and abuses his power, bedding everything that walks, and he thinks nothing of taking a life..." Fabian trailed off, too traumatised to carry on.

Yes, I knew that Kaspar. The Kaspar that enjoyed seeing the fear in your eyes, enjoyed hearing you scream, beg at his feet. The Kaspar that savoured others pain.

That hideous monster I hated.

But somehow, through my loathing, threw everything he had done to me, I felt pity. I knew how he felt. I knew how grief shaped... re-moulded your life. I knew how it could make you hate the ones you love with such a passion... it consumed you. I knew how you would do anything, just to escape, just to ease the pain for a single moment. How you would use others, hurt them just so they would suffer too.

I knew how you could turn into that hideous monster.

"I wish... Violet. I wish you could have seen us all before... before it happened. You would think of us

differently then. Seen us in happier times, before it killed our souls, and ruined every chance of peace and happiness. Before..."

I said nothing, frozen. I couldn't agree. That hate of vampires, that fear, it was embedded deep within me, passed from generation to generation, all the way back to those first humans, who had first learnt to fear these powerful creatures of the night.

"Do you know what the worst thing is Violet?" Fabian asked. "What makes it so unbearable?"

I shook my head, uncertain of where we were going.

"Jean-Pierre sent flowers to her funeral, a bunch of black roses. Attached was a note. It said"; His eyes glazed over as he recounted those written words.

"My greatest condolences. Today you bury a truly remarkable woman. And of all I have killed, it was her death that I felt the most. But order's are orders. Do not trust this government you are so quick to have faith in, one within them is corrupt. I will say no more.

All the best,

Jean-Pierre"

My mouth had fallen open.

"Someone within the government had ordered her death. We don't know who, or why. Probably someone new. But they did. And I swear, if I ever find out who, they will pay! I will suck their family dry, just so they know what it feels like, what it is like to lose someone! So they can feel that pain!" he finished, growling, fangs bared. His eyes were blood red, but flashing to black and back, faster than I could blink.

I drew back, scared of this side of Fabian I knew of, but had never seen. He looked down at me, his blonde hair falling over his livid eyes. But almost immediately, his expression softened, and his eyes returned to their airy blue.

"I'm sorry Violet, I didn't mean for you to see that," he murmured softly. He pulled me back to him, and I slowly allowed myself to mould to his chest, letting the onslaught of information sink in, fitting its way around what I already knew. It made so much sense...

My eyes started to droop, and sleep threatened to overtake me.

"You need to go to bed," Fabian's musical voice chimed in my ear. I nodded, barely conscious.

I felt him begin to lift me, and in seconds, I was being lowered on to soft sheets. My eyes were just about open, when I saw him sweep down towards me. For a moment, panic swept through me, but it soon went. Fabian wouldn't...

I felt his wintry lips brushing my cheek, as he kissed my soft skin.

"Sweet dreams Violet." A click of his fingers, and the candles on the wall went out. There was a rush of air... and silence.

My eyes closed, and everything went dark. Lazy thoughts drifted in and out of my mind, forming the beginnings of dreams.

My father had entered government two and a half years ago. He didn't like vampires I don't think...

My eyes flew open, and I sat bolt upright in bed.

He couldn't of... could he?

Chapter 16

# Dinner with a vampire. Did I mention I'm vegetarian? (16)

Dinner with a vampire. Did I mention I'm vegetarian? (Chapter 16)

It's here! Chapter 16! Enjoy guys!

And hahaha, I feel really cruel, I had this written and proof read five hours ago, but only just uploaded it.

Okay, that may have been because my internet was running slow. XD

And a shout out to Hayley-Nicole, for giving me the genius idea for this chapter!

=D

X

Oh, and the music most probably doesn't fit in here... but well, I am in love with it, so...

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e2Ma4BvMUwU (Requiem for a Dream)

Get a grip Violet.

If you want to survive this, throw it from your mind.

Lock it up, never let them see it.

They will snatch it from your mind, you know that.

Why do you care anyway? So what if some vampire had died. So what if your father did it? If they didn't find out, it was fine.

My stomach twisted into this huge knot, and it made me gag. How could I say such a thing?

Vampire or not, she was still loved. Her death still hurt others.

And I had no proof it was my father, it's a coincidence, I told myself firmly, still gagging a little. Desperate, I threw all thought of it into a box in my mind, locked it, and threw away the key. I would not think of it again, especially around others.

Trying to tell yourself that whilst hyperventilating is difficult.

I must have sat up all night, because before I knew it, the sun was seeping through the delicate voiles covering my window. My eyes blinked furiously, not used to the glaring light creeping it ways across the rug-covered room.

I slipped the ruffled covers off myself, and slid out of the bed. I looked down and realized I was still wearing my clothes from last night. I shuddered a little, disgusted. My top stuck to me, and beads of sweat ran down my back. I had broken out in a cold sweat, and my stomach was caning me. I walked towards the window, hoping, in vain, that it might have suddenly have unlocked itself.

Stupid window! All I wanted was some fresh air!

I smacked the glass in frustration. My stomach knotted up, and it was nothing to do with my stomach-ache. I slowly slid down the wall, as homesickness overtook me. Thoughts of my family rushed through my mind, my friends, my room, my home... London. As every image flashed through my

mind, more, and more sobs escaped my lips. I just wanted to go home. I just wanted to be free. That wasn't too much to ask, was it?

I lay there, curled up against the wall for a while, waiting for the longing to pass over. I knew it would. I flashed back, to when I was just ten. I had gone on a class trip to Wales, where we had stayed the week, doing all sorts of adventurous things. Climbing, kayaking, canoeing, white-water rafting, you name it, we did it.

But one thing sticks out in my mind about that trip.

I didn't enjoy a single moment of it.

Every hour had been spent thinking of home, longing for my family. Every mealtime had been quiet - I never talked to anyone, not even Ruby. And every bedtime had been spent quietly crying into my pillow, wishing the week would end sooner. I learnt that week that I needed my family more than anything in the world. More than friends. More than partying. More than sex, or booze.

I sighed, as I felt the heartfelt longing ebb away. I hauled myself up, and reluctantly headed for the shower. I grabbed some clothes out of the wardrobe - black skinnies and a tank top, with a black and white checked zip-up hoodie. I grabbed a pair of converse, and left my room.

What? I was feeling emotional! Emo clothes figure.

I locked myself in the bathroom, and turned the shower on, letting it wash all the grime away. I got dressed, and didn't bother with my hair. I ruffled it up a bit, and swept my fringe to the side. It will pass as bead head. I quickly applied thick black make up.

It felt good to get back to my emo roots. I missed it. You can only do slut for so long.

I was about to put all my (Lyla's) make up away, when I dropped the eye shadow. It burst open, and powder fell everywhere.

"Shit," I muttered. I dropped to my knees, and quickly swept it up; glad I had dropped it on the wooden part of the floor. I popped the case back into the make up

bag, and was about to put it away when I dropped that too.

"Woo, butter fingers or what?" I thought. I snatched it off the floor, and chucked it into the vanity cabinet in my wardrobe. By this time, my head was thumping, and my stomach was cramping painfully. I walked back into my bedroom, and dropped onto my front, army crawling under the bed. Time to cross off another day on my makeshift calendar. I grabbed a pencil off the floor, and made a small mark on the wall. 16th August. That date rang a bell for some reason. I screwed my forehead up, trying to remember the significance.

Hang on, if I had been here just over two weeks, and if it was halfway through August...

Dropping things? Headaches? Stomach cramps? Messed up emotions? Panicking, I started counting twenty-eight days back.

"Oh," I breathed.

Houston, we may have a problem.

- - - - - - - - - - - - - -

Lyla was away. It was a Sunday, so all the staff had a day off. The only people in the house were Fabian and I. Oh great... just great.

I searched the whole house, until I eventually found him, swimming lengths in the indoor pool. He broke the surface, and seeing me standing there, he smiled, and hoisted himself out. My mouth formed a little 'O'. He wore nothing but swim shorts (Phew - not Speedos!).

His stomach was beautifully toned, - a six pack. Droplets of water ran down his body, gliding over his silky smooth skin. I longed to just stroke his chest... touch his white skin.

His almost white hair was plastered to his face, falling over his eyes. I watched, as he jerked his head to the side, flicking his fringe out of his eyes.

Oh man, he really was... fit.

"Oh shut up girly!" the voice in my head growled, sounding exasperated. "Keep your bloody hormones under control!"

"Whatever, you are just a voice, you wouldn't understand," I jeered back, in my head obviously.

"Insulted," the voice replied, offended. Serves it right.

"Morning," Fabian said brightly, not even a hint of colour in his cheeks, despite the fact he had just been swimming. Instead, his chest rose and fell a little quicker than usual, and his breaths were slightly sharper, but not much so.

"Morning," I grunted back, attempting and failing to be enthusiastic about the word 'morning'.

"Cheer up, the sun is shining, and the birds are singing. It's gonna be a bright, bright, bright sun-shiny day," he chirped, singing the last part. I looked doubtfully out of one of the floor to ceiling windows. Heavy grey clouds hung over the estate and it looked stormy. I raised my eyebrows at him.

"Well..." he said apologetically. He grabbed a towel off a chair nearby, and flung it around his shoulders. Before I knew what was happening, he had dropped his shorts, and was pulling a pair of boxers on. I span around, facing the opposite wall, moving faster than

women do at the January sales. I screwed up my eyes, and blushed furiously.

"A little warning next time!" I squeaked, mortified.

He chuckled. "Oh come on, you don't strike me as the type of girl who hasn't seen it all before."

Ouch.

"Hey, don't bring my non-existent virginity into this!" I scorned, blushing even more.

"See, you admit it! Who was it? Come on spill! And you can turn around now," he called from behind me.

"No, I don't trust you."

"Don't trust me eh?" he chuckled again, and suddenly I felt cold arms wrapping themselves around my waist. He leant his chin on my head, and I could feel his bitterly cold breath on my hair. "Now, come on, who was it?" he asked once more.

I pursed my lips, and gently shook my head, indicating that I wasn't saying a thing. All of a sudden, I felt his gentle persona drifting its way into

my mind. I thanked God that my little black box, full of my dark secret was securely locked up, far from prying minds. But I couldn't say the same for a certain name, and his chocolate brown eyes.

"Joel?" Fabian muttered, almost darkly.

I looked sideways, a guilty smile playing its way across my mouth.

"How old... were you?" he asked.

"Fifteen," I muttered.

"Honestly, back in my day, and you would have"-

I couldn't stop myself, I burst out laughing. "Yeah..." Gasp. "Back in the dark ages!"

"HEY!" He exclaimed, and poked me in my side. I jumped six foot in the air - I was very ticklish. I squealed, and ran out the room, him hot on my heels. He quickly caught up, in like, less than a second, and pinned me to the wall, tickling me until I was begging him to stop.

"Ok... ok! Your... not, that ancient!" I gasped, between fits of giggles.

"Better," he growled. He let me go, and my giggles faded away. "Now, was there something you wanted to ask me?" he quizzed.

Oh damn, I had forgotten about that. Soon as I thought of that though, my stomach cramped painfully, and I rubbed it gently.

"Erm, yeah..." I began. "If... if I was bleeding... like bleeding a lot, would you... would you be able to resist it?" I asked.

"Well, it depends how hungry we are. I mean generally, I like to think I could exercise enough control. But if a vampire already had a taste for your blood, they might not be able to. Why?"

I shuddered. Kaspar has a 'taste' for my blood. Would he be able to resist? After all, he had called it 'sweet'.

"Erm... erm, well," I stuttered, more than embarrassed. I mean, how do you tell a vampire guy that? "Well, I might be... you know... having my... on, you know?"

"On?"

"I mean... I might be starting, my, you know... 'Time of the month' today."

He raised one eyebrow, and tilted his head to the side, trying to understand. He shook his head slightly, still not getting it.

Sheesh, how stupid are guys?!?

"Period," I mouthed.

"Oh... oh! OH!!!" His eyes flew wide in understanding, and although he couldn't blush, his eyes turned a faint shade of pink. He was embarrassed. Bless.

"So, err, what am I going to do about it?" I asked, snapping him back from his mortified daydream.

"Erm, well. Erm... have you, you know, started yet? Cos..."

"No, no, I haven't, but I might today," I explained hurriedly.

He nodded. "Well, I think Lyla might have some... stuff." I saw an opportunity here. I pushed my own embarrassment back, and said,

"Oh, do you mean sanitary towels and tampons?" I asked, throwing him an innocent smile.

"Err, yeah... that stuff," he said blankly, and his eyes widened even more. He started walking away, vacantly. I followed him, skipping along. I ignored the painful protests of my stomach, and smiled.

"So, do vampires have periods then?" It was surprisingly easy to talk to Fabian about this, but that might just be because I was out for revenge.

"Yeah... but only every ten years." My mouth fell open. Every ten years? "They have a longer cycle than humans," he explained.

"So how do you know about human 'cycles' then?" I asked keen to keep him mortified.

"Human biology is literal at Vampirs," he muttered, a dark gleam in his eye.

"Vampirs?"

"Vampire boarding school. Cain goes there, at least he does when he isn't on holidays."

"Vampires have schools?" I scoffed.

"Just the one," he replied. "In Transylvania."

I raised my eyebrows, frowning.

"Isn't that where the slayers are"- I began, but Fabian cut in.

"It is not possible for a human to set foot within a mile of that school. Only vampires can enter. No one else," he replied icily, and I regretted mentioning the subject of slayers. It felt like something was stabbing at my heart, and I heard rattling inside my head. Like something trying to escape. My secret?

"So... did you go there? Do all vampires go there?" I asked, hastily steering the subject away from slayers.

"Yes, I did. And almost all vampires between the ages of ten and eighteen go. Other than the rogues, that is."

"Rogues?" I questioned.

"Vampires who live by the old way, killing humans wherever possible. They see vampires as a superior species. That is who the slayers should be hunting,

not us," he replied bitterly, and I sensed that the last part was not said for my benefit.

I looked up to see Lyla's door, and we stepped through. "I think her stuff is in there," Fabian said, pointing towards a chest of drawers in the corner. I walked over, and rummaged through, feeling intrusive. Eventually, I found a packet of pads, and a boxful of tampons. I got up, and walked out, not liking to be in Lyla's room without permission. Fabian walked me to my room, and I was about to step in when he spoke.

"I think... you should be fine... long as you use the tampons," Fabian said, his eyes turning pink again. I smiled. He looked so cute when his eyes did that.

"Erm, ok, thanks," I replied, equally as embarrassed. This is not what I had in mind when I read the job description for a hostage.

Haha, sense the sarcasm.

I was just about to close the door, when Fabian grabbed my wrist.

"Violet, is there something you want to tell me? Something that is bothering you?" he looked me straight in the eye, and I had no choice but to look back, his presence luring me in even now.

Damn vampires and their powers of seducing prey.

My breath caught, and a little stab of panic went searing though my system, jump-starting my heart. Did he know?

"No... No, there's nothing. I'm fine. Honest."

He gave me a sceptical look, before shutting the door, leaving me stood there, paralyzed by my waning panic.

- - - - - - - - - - - - - -

So much time seemed to pass here unnoticed, as if the sands of time seemed to take pleasure in dropping when my back was turned. Before I knew it, the sun had set over Varnley, (the name of the Varn's estate, in case you didn't know). The moon would be rising, if it were not covered by menacing storm clouds, that rolled in over the forest-covered hills.

It had started raining earlier, falling in great torrents, just as they had on my first night here. I gave the weather merit - the rain persisted right through the afternoon, well into the evening, and still fell as night drew in.

Just as I changed for bed, the first flashes of lighting illuminated my dark room. Great shadows were cast on the walls, and I watched, almost in awe, as forks of lightening were sent rocketing to the ground - I could almost feel the electric buzzing below my feet. Seconds later, great clasps of thunder echoed over the valley. I slipped into bed, forcing the childhood fear of a storm aside. The voiles covering the French doors swayed a little, as the fierce winds found there way in through minute cracks.

I pulled the sheets tight around myself, banishing the cold. I shut my eyes tight, and slowly, fell into an uneasy sleep.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

A dark cloaked figure swept his way through the dark forest. He had left the others far behind, tired of their slow progress. He felt little for them - they were

pawns in a great chessboard... his chessboard. He knew rogues ruled this part of the forest, and perhaps he should feel guilt at leaving the rest to deal with them... but somehow, he could not. He was a selfish creature, serving his own needs first and foremost. Why did he need care anyway?

It was his life that was valued, no one else's.

He smiled darkly to himself. Rogues. He was one himself, even if not many knew it. He silently walked along, not making a sound, his movements perfectly fluid, graceful as a lark, but stealthy as an eagle, as fast as a Falcon, and as gruesome as a vulture. His lips twitched at his analogy.

He blinked, out of habit, not need, and watched casually as his destination came into view. He was quickly distracted, however, when there was a rustle of leaves just to his right. His head snapped around, and he caught a scent. Not much - but enough. He leapt ten metres or so in the direction his instincts led him, and landed, catlike, just inches in front of a rabbit. It hesitantly sniffing at the ground, before becoming frozen in fear, and the cloaked figure took

the opportunity to inhale the mouth-watering scent. Such a smell... But his throat burned, dryer than it had been in weeks. He could wait no longer.

He snatched the creature in his hands, and expertly broke its neck with a satisfying SNAP! He held the meat close to his mouth, before rolling his blood red lips back, and plunging his fangs deep into the rabbit's flesh. He sucked it dry, savouring every drop. It was not good... too bitter for his liking, but he knew he had little choice. He threw the drained carcass aside, and proceeded on his way. Already, that familiar dryness was returning, his throat aching for more already.

Nothing seemed to satisfy anymore... not since...

He shook his head, flinging his sopping wet hair from his face. How he hated the rain. He knew it was not the blood he longed for, but all that was associated with taking a human's blood. Such an awesome sense of control... such powerful emotions. He knew, once he returned, he would not hold out much longer.

He knew the path well, so he need not look down. Instead, he focused on the ever-nearing building: his

destination. It was an ornate building, but quite insignificant, considering what it concealed. It was not large, and built entirely of some grey stone, that the cloaked figure had long suspected to be granite - one of only two minerals a vampire found impossible to destroy. Several small steps led up to an entrance, guarded by two stone pillars. The door itself was made of marble - a favourite among vampires for its grand nature, and for the fact it was the other mineral immune to inhuman strength. With stone walls, and an apex roof, it looked like it belonged in Pompeii, not a forest overgrown with poison ivy.

He reached the door, and pushed it open. It swung open with some protest, the rusted hinges whining.

He stepped inside, breathing in the stale air. He coughed a little. Dust had already formed since his last visit. Inside it was quite plain too. In front of him were a set of stone steps, leading deep underground. Behind them was a dais, and set upon that, a throne, made of the same grey stone as the building. It sat there, unused, or it at least appeared so.

He shuddered. Even he, who had seen almost every horror this world had to present, was at unease around that throne.

In vampire folklore, it was known as the Throne of Death, where the ever-present but never-seen guardian of the catacombs sat.

A breeze blew through the room, and eager to be done with his business, the cloaked figure descended the steps, taking three at a time, impatient. He reached the bottom, and had he been human, he would have felt the considerable drop in temperature, and the icy chill in the still air of the tombs.

He bowed his head, not out of respect, but out of selfish desire, to prevent himself from bumping his head on the low roof. He walked silently down the long corridor, passing many tombs, most open, revealing charred corpses of long dead vampires. His footsteps were the only sound in the darkness, and even he admitted he had to strain to hear them. He smiled to himself. Not even the rats dared venture

down here. His ego swelled, knowing only he had the courage to explore the dark depths of the catacombs.

A few minutes later, and the passageway opened out, revealing a much larger room. Pillars lined the length of the room, and at the far end, was an ornate tomb, much larger than the others. It was covered in stone roses, and strange writing was inscribed on the lid. On top, lay a real black rose, withering, dying. Just like the body inside, he thought. Or at least the charred remains of the body.

Out of his cloak, he produced a crimson red rose, which he placed gently beside the black one, which he promptly tucked back inside the folds of his cloak. He turned to leave, but not before placing his hands on the seal, and closing his eyes for a moment.

Such precious memories...

An owl sat in a tree, its beady eye watching as the cloaked figure closed the marble door quietly behind him, and rushed off. The owl was not stupid; it flew away, rising high above the treetops, waiting until the figure had past.

The figure sped along, intending to return to the others. He did not trust them to be alone for long. However, a flicker of movement, perhaps a mile to his left caught his eye. He stopped, the air rushing past him, not as quick as him to pause. What was it? His vision, although excellent, could not see that far.

His curiosity aroused, he took to the tress, bounding from one to another, depending on their leafy cover. As he approached, he slowed down, silently inching forward.

He settled himself in a tree about thirty yards away. In a small clearing, sat three men around the embers of a campfire. They talked in monotones, voices clearly showing no affection.

The two sat nearest him were vampires; there was no doubt about that. One had dark skin, but his hollow cheeks and lifeless looking skin told all. The other was white, whiter than white, and both had gaunt looks and cherry red lips. But the man sat facing him - he was tan, scars adorning every inch of his skin.

A hunter.

The cloaked figure bared his fangs, fighting the urge to growl. Why did these vampires, clearly rogues, but vampires all the same, not kill him?

"I know full well I cannot step onto Varnley without permission, being human. But you two, you need no permission. You have 'friends', to help you I trust?" the hunter said in an oily voice. The cloaked figure's ears perked up.

"There is no question of whether we are capable, Claude, there is only a question of are earnings. You say you pay well?" The dark skinned one said.

"Yes. If you follow our orders correctly, which there is no doubt of," Claude said, eyeing the glaring expressions of the two vampires sat in front of him. "You will be paid well. You will receive 500,000 Romanian Leu... each." He stopped expectantly, waiting for the vampires expressions of awe. But they did not come.

"Is that all?" the pale one said. The cloaked figure almost smiled to himself as he listened. True vampire arrogance there.

"You will also receive free-lease hunting grounds on London. No hunter or slayer will trouble you. It will be your human playground," the hunter smiled to himself. No rogue vampire could resist that deal. The two rogues glanced at each other, excitedly. Each gave a small nod, and the hunter knew it was a done deal.

"We have a deal. Now what do we have to do?" the dark skinned one said.

"It is simple. Michael Lee wants his daughter back. You will go, execute all the guards, allowing us to enter. We will take the girl to Lee. The rest of the clan will infiltrate the mansion, and kill as many of the Varns as possible. Without a monarch you will be free to do what you will, and we will finally be rid of their craving for peace. Rogues will roam the earth as they should, and we will leave all those that support us alone. I will let you know about dates, and the details. Are we in agreement?" the hunter's slick voice hung in the silence. Both vampires nodded, seemingly eager to have a chance at a fight.

"Then, my friends, I must leave you. Until then." He got up, and within seconds, was swallowed into the darkness.

The cloaked figure crouched still, high in the branches, debating whether to kill the hunter or not. He was eager for a kill, eager for human blood... but something stopped him.

An unspoken promise.

Quietly, he left the two rogues alone, knowing he had not the energy to fight two vampires, high on human blood, when he was so weak. He darted back through the forest, intent upon finding the others. They had to be told. Pawns on a chessboard they might be, but pawns on a chessboard needed to know information.

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I woke up, screaming. The storm still raged outside, the rain still pummelling the ground.

That dream... if it was a dream, it had seemed so real. The dark cloaked figure, his face forever hidden in shadow. The tombs, and the stale, icy air. The

clearing, and the... the conversation. It had seemed so real. More than real, like... like I was there.

I knew it couldn't be. It was just my fears of being stuck here, of what would happen when I was 'rescued', playing on my mind, making there way into my dreams.

It couldn't be real.

I squealed, as a huge clap of thunder made me jump. I buried myself deep under the covers, until finally; I fell back into a dreamless sleep.

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A great clap of thunder sounded, and far below Violet's room, several dark figures emerged from the forest, their cloaks pulled tight against the rain, hoods covering their faces. They all walked with a sense of self-importance - arrogance. Vampires. They swept towards the entrance, and as they reached the steps, the doors swept open, granting them entry.

The lead vampire flung his hood back. He sniffed the air, a sweet scent making his throat burn.

"I smell blood."

Chapter 17

# Dinner with a vampire. Did I mention I'm vegetarian? (17)

Dinner with a vampire. Did I mention I'm vegetarian? (Chapter 17)

You have no idea how fun it was writing this!!! And random mix of music, I know, but it is just what I was listening to whilst writing this, so I figured...

And thanks to all my fans (hehe, I feel weird saying that! XD), you are all great, thankyou all for following my story.

So, hope you enjoy!

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3p3c0auE1YQ&NR=1 (Ice Planet by Two Steps From Hell)

HYPERLINK "http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Ivz1XfpG_8" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Ivz1XfpG_8 (Burning down the House by The Used)

HYPERLINK "http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0dPS-EHl-FE" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0dPS-EHl-FE (The Heart Asks Pleasure First by Michael Nyman)

Entrance #1

I woke up early the next morning, my dream still troubling me. I was groggy, and tired, but eager to be awake before the Varns returned. It was Monday, and the storm was just a distant memory. The sun was breaking through the fluffy white clouds, and the day had a summery feel to it.

I quickly got ready, and headed out, but not before glancing at the clock. 4:30am! Bloody hell, must be a

record! I reached the top of the stairs, and stopped dead in my tracks. My mouth fell open.

Lets just say the Varns had returned.

But they weren't alone.

I gawped down at the sight below me, and slowly everyone turned. First to look up was Fabian, who smiled. Kaspar turned, a scowl on his face. In a flash, twenty other vampires were staring up at me. I glared back, clearly showing my displeasure.

Do they always bring back 'friends'?

They were mostly men, but there were a couple of women too. I spotted Charity in the centre, shooting me murderous looks. They were a mix of ages, some looking as young as Kaspar; some looked like they should be lying in a coffin right now.

There was a wolf whistle from the bottom of the stairs, and I looked down, looking for the source of the sound. Leaning against the bottom step was an amazingly handsome guy, his brown tussled hair cut short, a little stubble on his chin. He had brown eyes,

which reminded me of Joel's. He looked up casually at me, clearly staring at my breasts.

"Who's the hot chick, Kaspar?" He whistled once more. He had a thick American accent, and his skin wasn't as pale as any of the English vampires.

"Who's the leech?" I retorted, not liking this guy already.

"Whoa! Human chick!" he smirked. I rolled my eyes at him.

"You must be Violet," some seriously old dude said.

"The one and only," I replied. Somehow rebelling against strangers was satisfying. I walked down the stairs, very aware of the stares coming my way. Suddenly, a huge blue bag was being flung my way. I caught it, wincing a little. Man, was it heavy.

"Your stuff," Kaspar said. I flung it over my shoulder with a wince, glad it was just clothes. I walked up the stairs, walking back into my room, but not before screaming back down,

"WHO THE HELL ARE YOU ALL?"

Entrance #2

I flung the bag onto the bed, and ripped the zipper across. I rummaged through, various items of clothing flying everywhere. After a minute or so, I found what I was looking for. I pulled of my top, and slipped another one on instead. It showed a little bit too much cleavage, but it was an awesome top.

Trust me, it really was.

I looked in one of the side pockets, and found my beloved purple iPod. I practically kissed it. I slipped it into the pocket of my jeans, and haphazardly threw everything back into the bag.

I smirked as I walked back. This may be really heartless of me, but it was so going to be worth it.

I walked back to the top of the stairs, and hopped down them, heading towards the kitchen, still smirking. They parted as I walked past, giving them full view of me, allowing them to read my top. Yes - read. As I walked past Kaspar, he silently mouthed the words written on my top.

"Edward Cullen? Sorry, I don't do vampires. But I would tap Van Helsing any day!"

He read it through twice, his eyes becoming wider, and darker. I flashed him my special innocent smile, and continued past. I past the vampires, and quickly headed to the kitchen. I grabbed a slice of dry bread, and headed back out, passing through them all. I nibbled on the crust, now trying me best to ignore the angry glares of thirty or so vampires. Guess they don't like my top. I quickly started climbing the stairs, holding my head high, trying to stay smug.

"And as to who the hell are we, girly, we are the Vampire Council," Kaspar voiced from below me, breaking the silence. I stopped, and slowly turned.

Didn't this guy know what a rhetorical question was?

"Vampires have councils?"

"Plainly, you are looking at it," Kaspar retorted.

I gave an uninterested humph, folding my arms across my chest. I would have walked off then, except something rooted me to the spot, making my legs heavy and reluctant to move. A man... no vampire,

was watching me with unwavering concentration, stood in the far corner of the room. He looked about twenty-four, but that counted for nothing. He had short, cropped silver hair, and an extremely angular face, with prominent cheek cones. His eyes were so narrow they were more like slits, but even here, I could see they were a dark blue. He was tall, very tall, and powerfully built. He was not plain - quite handsome in fact, but there was something that made him repulsive. Perhaps it was his stance, looking up at me through his narrow eyes, expression cold, but intrigued in a perverted way. Or maybe it was his crimson cloak, the colour of blood.

I don't know. But he was menacing, and to be avoided. I was sure of that.

And I bet I smelt delicious right now.

I tore my gaze away from this mysterious new arrival, and began to climb the stairs, eager to just be alone, so I could ponder my dream again.

"Oh, and Violet, you are to be down for dinner later, after our meeting. And wear something nice." He

gestured to my clothing with his hand, motioning for me to leave at the same time.

I almost... almost, stuck my tongue out at him, but instead stormed off up the stairs, insulted.

Stupid boy. Wouldn't know nice if it hit him in the face.

I crashed on my bed, thumping the mattress in frustration. Life was just too confusing. There was just way too much to think about.

And now I had to go and make small talk with a bunch of bloodthirsty vamps.

Aren't I the lucky one?

Dinner with a vampire. Did I mention I'm vegetarian?

JOY.

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JOY.

I sat at the far end of the table, hardly listening, as my father had some debate about something or other with one of the crimson family.

Ilta Crimson.

Swindler. Whole family were. They thought they had some superior claim above the rest of vampire kind, including us.

But Ilta was the worst. Quiet, calm, controlled, always the charmer, no one could find any fault in him. He was a snake. He would slither into everything, unheard, seemingly with good intentions. But just as you thought you could trust him, he would rise up and bite you, realising his deadly venom. And then he would just disappear again with his claimed prize, just to throw it away, disinterested not long after.

I should know. He spent the best part of ten years convincing Charlotte that she was too good for me. And it worked.

A pang clung to my chest for a moment. I hadn't thought of that in years now. Thought I had forgotten. Perhaps not...

I suppressed my boredom as the meeting progressed. My only consolation was the firm grasp on my leg, which came from Charity sat next to me. She looked up at me with adoring eyes, batting her eyelids, giving me the occasional seductive wink. Guess I knew what I was up to tonight.

She began stroking the inside of my leg, and I shuddered a little, enjoying the feelings of lust gushing through my system. I shuddered again, involuntarily.

"Cold, are we Kaspar?" Ilta grinned from the other side of the room, false concern in his voice. His dark blue eyes were crinkled with amusement.

"No, no, quite fine Ilta," I said, returning the same fake politeness.

My father turned to glare at me, his eyes widening. He gave the tinniest shake of his head, and I knew he was perfectly aware of the whereabouts of Charity's hand. I discretely slipped one of my hands under the table, and moved her hand back down to my knee. She looked up at me for a moment, and feigned hurt.

But I knew she was faking it. Nothing would upset her today.

Dracula, some teen vamp's magazine, had voted her most likely to become the next Queen. And man, was she happy about it. She was considered my 'girlfriend'. Or at least the most popular of my 'friends'.

The reality was, she was arm candy, that doubled up as eye candy. And that is all a Prince needs. Love doesn't come into it.

Duty above need.

I blinked a few times, re-focusing on the meeting.

"I say we just kill her. That way all our troubles our over."

"No, no Lamair that will cause problems with the mortal government. We have to be diplomatic."

"But"-

"I will happily take her off your hands, it would be more than my pleasure," the American dude said. Lance was his name. Biggest cockshiner if there ever

was one. He was a little younger than me, about a hundred, and inexperienced in the ways of the council. But he would soon learn. Almost immediately, he received a hasty elbow in the ribs from his brother, Alexander.

"I apologise on behalf of my brother for his inappropriate comment. He is a little... excited," Alex said, ruefully. He caught my eye and grinned. I grinned back, glad to hear his thick Georgian accent again. It had been too long...

"Forgive me, Your Majesty, but I don't understand why we are risking the kingdom for the sake of one human girl? Surely, she is not worth that?" some vampire I did not recognise voiced.

There were several calls of "hear, hear." I noticed Eaglen, the oldest and most respected of vampires was unusually quiet. His long silver hair was tied into a ponytail, and his goatee swept over his shoulder. He leaned on his hands thoughtfully, but almost as soon as I looked at him, he raised his eyes to mine, and watched me for a while. I knew he delved deep into my mind, picking each thought

apart. But he did not do it through Vamperic powers, or even by invading my mind. Just by wisdom.

I gazed around the room, watching various people. Arabella, quiet as always, was listening intently, following each exchange with pensive reflect.

"Because, my friends, this is the daughter of one of the greatest antagonists of vampire kind. We cannot afford to be rash, for fear of starting something we shall long regret," my father explained. That one crucial fact still didn't seemed to have sunk into their thick skulls.

"How do even know the Pierre clan will attack? How do we know they have sought the help of rogues? I see no proof. And until then, I refuse to even consider a plan of action," Lamair said.

I sighed. We had been over this twice already.

"My dear Lamair, as I said, we have..." my father paused, glancing at the floor briefly, "reliable sources," he finished.

Mutterings erupted throughout the room, and I resolved to stare at the bookshelves of my father's study, desperate to entertain myself.

My father cleared his throat. "This meeting is adjourned. We will discuss the matter when, as Lamair insists, we have 'solid proof'."

I sighed again, exasperated. What a fat lot of good that was. Five hours stuck in here, and we had agreed on nothing.

Chairs scraped, and everybody left the room, bowing and curtseying. Charity skipped off after them, excitedly whispering that she was going to go and get ready for dinner. No doubt, she had a new dress to parade around in, that I 'must' compliment. Marvellous.

"Try and stay focused next time Kaspar," my father scolded from the opposite side of the room, where he stood waiting for me to join him. Reluctantly, I walked towards him, waiting for the lecture I would undoubtedly receive.

"Five hours father! Five hours, and they agreed on nothing. It's enough to send any creature into hibernation!" I protested.

"I know son, but that is how it works. And you will get used to it. It will be your duty as King to"-

"Serve your people righteously, at any cost or inconvenience to yourself, for that is what the Varn's have been doing since the dawn of time. And you will do it with pride!" I mimicked, drawing it to a supposedly rousing end.

If only I had a penny for every time he had said that. I would be stinking rich. Well, I was anyway. But not the point.

"And you will show respect!" my father finished, clearly annoyed by my clear lack of interest. "Now go and get ready for dinner." With that I left the room, rolling my eyes behind his back.

Small talk over dinner. Lucky me.

I hope Violet knew how much trouble she was causing.

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The clock was nearing six, and reluctant, I slid from the bed, sleepy after my afternoon doze. I hadn't meant to fall asleep, but I was suffering - I hadn't had my iron supplements for almost two and a half weeks, and I was sure paying for it. It was tough being anaemic.

I walked to the wardrobe, where I had dumped my bag earlier. I opened it, and scowled at the mess I had created. Clothes were thrown in, creased now. I pushed these aside, reaching for the items at the bottom. These were neatly folded, and from what I could see, organised - tops in one pile, jeans in another.

Lyla no doubt.

I pulled something lacy from the bottom, and smiled as I saw what I had pulled out. This would do.

It was a short prom dress, black, and came down to my mid thigh. It was corseted and boned, and had a heart shaped strapless collar - sort of. Lace covered the chest and collar, rising up until it reached the

neckline. It was sleeveless, and the lace was embroidered with swirling lines.

I rummaged through, found my strapless bra, and quickly changed. I applied make-up, sweeping a little glitter over my wrists. I clipped my purple extensions in, and curled my hair. It swept down my back in elegant waves, and I looked in the mirror satisfied.

I honestly would not have bothered with any of this, but I had no choice. I wanted to look nice. I wanted to look attractive. I knew that wasn't me, it was just what a mansion full of vampires did to you. You wanted to please. Stupid vampire seduction.

I might as well just jump up and down and squeal "BITE ME!"

I glanced at the clock once more, and panicked a little. How did I know when I should go down?

Just then, there was a knock at the door. I breathed a sigh of relief, and got up to answer it. I pulled the door open, and did a double take as I saw who the source of the knock was.

It was the vampire from the far corner of the room. His dark eyes were wider now, warmer, and a smile adorned his face. He wore a black suit with a crimson tie, and his short hair was spiked up.

"Forgive me, Miss Lee, but I have been sent to escort you to dinner," he said in a smooth voice. I blushed a little, charmed.

"Oh, erm, just give me two minutes, I'm nearly ready," I stuttered.

"Of course," he replied. I ran back into my wardrobe, glancing at my legs. Thank god they had been waxed a couple of weeks ago. I rushed towards the sink, and quickly brushed my teeth. I scrabbled around, flustered, looking for my shoes. I finally spied them in the corner, flung out of my bag. I slipped them on, and was glad they were just flat ballerina shoes. Dealing with heels could be a problem right now.

"So, tell me, who are you?" I called from the wardrobe.

"My name is Ilta crimson, fourth son of Valerian Crimson."

Right.

"Oh, so you are the heir then?" I called back.

"You could say that."

I lurched up as I heard his voice right behind me. I took a couple of steps back, startled at his sudden closeness. He was right behind me, so close he could touch me.

"Do not be scared, Miss Lee. I will not hurt you," he offered his hand in a friendly gesture, but I recoiled, fearful.

"Come to me. I am simply inquisitive about your mind, and of course your most intriguing future. Come, come to me child," he smiled, a little too nicely, revealing his extremely sharp fangs.

"What do you know about my future?" I said, cynically.

"Only child, that you have two paths ahead of you. Two very different paths. And you shall be forced down one by destiny. So much power will rest on your shoulders. Many shall behold you, many shall

manipulate you. Your life will not be your own, and you will live only for others. You, a mortal, shall be bestowed with fate itself."

"Rubbish. I won't be forced into anything!" I replied. What a load of bullshit!

"You have no choice." He reached out with his hand, and placed it on my cheek. I shivered - it was so cold. He met my blurring gaze, and smiled manically.

And so I fell into blackness.

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Confusing thoughts swirled around the darkness, as I was forced to withdraw to the most sadistic depths of my mind. A thousand images flashed trough, my whole life sped up, framed in just a second.

Joel... our first date.

Meeting Ruby for the first time.

Lily being born.

Going out clubbing on a Saturday night, getting drunk.

Suddenly, everything just stopped, and I fell into some deeper darkness, into something more malevolent. My sub-conscience.

Everything went. Sound, sight, smell, touch.

My eyes flew open, but I was not where I should be. No. I was lying on the cold, wet ground, surrounded by mossy leaves and tall, ominous trees. I could hear the battering of rain, but it barely fell here, apart from the occasional drop that escaped the forest's protective canopy. I slowly got to my feet, leaning up against the rough bark of a pine nearby. My eyes slowly adjusted to the dark, and slowly, very slowly, I began to see the looming shadows in the night.

I stood there for an age, watching the unmoving gloom. Something told me just to wait.

All of a sudden, a sound echoed in the stillness. The sound of a cloak flapping in the wind. I jerked my head around, desperately searching for the source of the noise, but found none. My eyes broadened, and my breaths came in short sharp pants.

And then I saw it. Far away, a dark cloaked figure.

The same dark cloaked figure I had seen... no been, in my dream last night. It was definitely him - for it was a him without doubt. He had the same predator's prowl, and jet-black cloak that covered him from head to foot. It's long trail swept behind him, blown a little by the breeze.

I held my breath for a minute, afraid. But suddenly, I found myself running... running desperately - but not away... no... towards. I leapt over fallen branches, mud splashing onto my dress, shoes left far behind. Branches whipped at my leg, but I didn't care. I had no control. I didn't know what I was doing, but my legs just kept moving. No control...I had to know who he was. I had to see his face... I had to hear his voice... I had to catch him.

I ran faster and faster... I should be gaining, gaining... running... running, but he was retreating fast into the shadows... I had to... I had to know.

I sprung over a huge log, but never reached the ground. The darkness encased me once more, and I was falling... falling back into my mind. No... NO!.

My eyes flew back open once more, and I was sat on the windowsill of my room, looking down upon the scene below me. The storm that had not tainted the forest was raging here, and the rain fell, battering the ground. My dress was torn, covered in mud, and my legs were riddled in small cuts, blooding running freely down.

A great clap of thunder sounded, and far below my room, several dark figures emerged from the forest, their cloaks pulled tight against the rain, hoods covering their faces. Their cloaks were made of a dark crimson material, as though they had been stained by blood. They all walked with a sense of self-importance - arrogance. Vampires. They swept towards the entrance, and as they reached the steps, the doors swept open, granting them entry.

The scene shifted once more, and I was sat on the bottom step of the staircase in the entrance hall, blood still gushing down my legs. My lower stomach cramped painfully, and I winced, but heard no sound. I blinked, and the doors were flung open revealing five crimson cloaked figures sweeping up the steps.

They stepped in, and the butlers shut the double doors with a huge THUD!

The lead vampire flung his hood back, revealing chiselled features, and slit-like dark blue eyes. His silver hair was dripping wet, and the water streaked across his face looked like liquid silver.

"Ilta Crimson, so pleased you could come at such short notice," A disgruntled figure said dryly, no pleasure in his voice. His emerald eyes pierced the gloom of the room, and blonde highlights stood out dark against his dark hair which fell haphazardly.

The crimson cloaks bowed stiffly, some uttering the words "Your Highness." But the lead vampire... Ilta sniffed the air, a sweet scent making his throat burn.

"I smell blood."

I screamed, looking down at the blood gushing freely from the wounds on my legs, and for the first time I could feel the pain - excruciating, unbearable pain. I screamed, screamed as the scene swirled into nothing, and I fell... down... down, into nothing.

---

"What... what happened?" I asked, as I found myself slumped up against the wall, with no memory of the past half an hour. I looked at my perfectly curled hair, and elegant dress, confused. My legs were silky smooth, and it felt like I had mascara on.

"Why am I dressed like this? And who are you? You're not a Varn!" I accused, demanding answers from a smartly dressed vampire in front of me. He had dark blue eyes, and angular, bony cheekbones.

"To answer your first question - you must have collapsed, because I found you like this a minute ago, when I was sent to collect you for dinner. Which answers your second question. You are having dinner with vampire aristocracy. And as to who am I? I am Ilta Crimson."

I nodded. I remembered that I was having dinner. Ilta offered his hand, and pulled me to my feet in one swift movement. I saw his muscles tense, and I blushed just for looking. He looked me deep in the eyes, concerned.

"Are you okay? You don't feel faint or anything?" he said, his voice velvety.

I blushed again, and felt butterflies fluttering about in my stomach. "Yes... yes I'm fine. I just don't know what happened."

He nodded with understanding.

"And thanks by the way. For erm... saving me and all," I grinned sheepishly.

"The pleasure was all mine, Miss Lee. I suppose you could call me your knight in shining armour!" he grinned back. I glanced at his silvery hair. Shining? Yes, that fitted.

He held out his arm, and glanced at me sideways.

"Now, shall we?"

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What Violet failed to notice was the satisfied grin on Ilta's face, as he led her down the grand staircase.

The grin of a villain who has just accomplished a particularly nasty part of his devious plan.

Chapter 18

# Dinner with a vampire. Did I mention I'm vegetarian? (18)

Dinner with a vampire. Did I mention I'm vegetarian? (Chapter 18)

Okay, so it is official guys! I am on the 100th page of this novel in my word document! One more page and this is the longest book I have ever written! XD

And hehe ^^ I had a bit of a Linkin Park fest here, so erm yeah. Good idea to listen to the songs =)

This hasn't really been proof read that well, just briefly!

And mwahahahahaaaa.

I felt like saying that. So anyway, enjoy!!!

And thanks to every single fan of mine out there. All 164 of you! Oh hangon - 165 of you. (Just got an email =) And to my bestest fans, you know who you are, you guys keep me writing, so a massive thank you!

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3FMn2oYWBIw (The little things give you away by Linkin Park)

HYPERLINK "http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AyBFySXi6Cc" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AyBFySXi6Cc (No More Sorrow by Linkin Park)

HYPERLINK "http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tqgAAqCqiBI" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tqgAAqCqiBI (My December by Linkin Park)

I walked into the dining room, arm resting gently on Ilta's, a small smile decorating my face. Candles flickered in their holders on the walls softly lighting the room. The dark mahogany panelling on the wall made it feel quite homely - something I was not used to here. Red drapes were closed over the windows, and in the centre of the room was an extremely long table, covered with a white tablecloth. It was laid with elaborate cutlery, and the china looked as though it cost the earth for a single plate.

Ilta led me to the far end of the table, where he pulled out my chair for me. I sat down, and in a blink, he was opposite me, pulling his chair out. Vampires filed in after us, taking their seats. Sat next-door-but-one to me on the left was the American guy from the entrance hall, and actually sat next to me a man who looked uncannily like him. Fabian sat to my right.

After a few minutes, everyone was seated, and a dull chatter filled the room. Suddenly, their was a chinking sound, and I looked up to see a waiter gently tapping a glass. He stood by the door, dressed in white and black.

"Presenting His Majesty King Vladimir, and their Royal Highnesses the Varn's."

Outside, there was a low rumble of thunder, close, so close, for the room shook, the glasses threatening to tip. The room lit up, and a storm seemed to brew in that very room. The candles spluttered periodically, unsure of whether to cease giving their light. In an instant, everything seemed to change, the whole atmosphere of the room darkened, became more

sinister. The hairs on my arms stood up, goose bumps forming as a cold breeze whipped around the room.

My heart thumped to an erratic, marching beat, eager to follow some unseen battle. It consumed my thoughts, and it was all I could hear - save for the ever-nearing clashes of thunder.

I felt detached from reality, as though I was looking upon the scene through another's eyes, outsider's eyes. I saw everything, every person, every movement, slowed down, in precious detail. Time had slowed down.

Nothing moved for what seemed like an aeon.

Nothing moved, nothing sounded. For one moment, time stood still.

And then, as quickly as it slowed, the tempo returned, but the pounding beat continued, echoing around my head. Drumming out the rhythm my life must follow.

Everyone hastily stood up, but of course, hastily for a vampire is not slow. I felt myself being hoisted to my feet by my elbows, and looked either side to see

Fabian and the unknown vampire pulling me to my feet.

Everyone bowed low, and I followed, curtseying, seeing Charity doing the same out of the corner of my eye. I kept my eyes to the floor, afraid to look up.

But of course I did, and gasped.

I had never seen such beauty in my life.

The candles flickered dramatically as the King of Vampires walked into the room, wearing a black suit with a white shirt and black bow tie. Embroidered on the pocket of the suit was the vampire coat of arms - the black rose dripping with blood. It was silver and emerald; the same colour as Kaspar's eyes. Sat atop the King's head was a simple silver crown, emerald jewels set in at intervals, catching the light in magical ways.

He demanded such presence, and I had no choice but to look at him, watch his elegant self sweep into the room.

He was a man of power. There was no doubt about that.

Kaspar followed him, head held high, wearing the same suit as his father. He walked with self-assurance towards our end of the table, as though he had done this a thousand times, as though it was norm.

But of course; it was for him.

His hair fell perfectly, covering his eyes, and the candles made his pale skin glow with warm shades of honey and fawn. He wore a small silver crown and an arrogant smile revealed his gleaming fangs, and quickly, ever so quickly, I saw him wink at Charity, who wore a domineering smile, flashing glares at every other female in the room.

I stared at him hard, unable to take my eyes off him. As he past me, his eyes glided up and down me, taking in my dress. His lips twitched, and he continued on, a bigger smile forming on his lips. A smile formed on my lips too.

The other family members followed him in, the males all wearing the same suit and black bow tie, the females wearing white dresses with an emerald green sash. They stood at the far end of the table, a few places towards my right. I smirked satisfied, as I

realized I was nearer the head of the table than Charity was.

Life was so sweet sometimes.

They sat down as one, and the rest of us followed. Silence ensued, after the racket of scraping chairs and billowing dresses.

Waiters began to zip around, pouring a red liquid into the glasses from wine bottles. Not that it was wine. I think we all know what it was.

A waiter appeared at my side, and in an incredibly stuck up accent, asked if I would "Prefer red or white wine." I answered white, and he whisked away, returning in seconds with a different bottle, pouring the drink into my glass, before moving onto the next person.

After a minute or two, they finished, moving to the side of the room, where they stood, motionless.

The King stood up, deathly serious as usual.

"You all know why we are gathered here," he glanced at me, and the whole room shot me monstrous

glares. I looked about, confused. What had I done? I didn't know why the hell they were here!

"Although they may be grave circumstances, and it may cause conflict within our ranks, I pray we will stay united, during this... difficult time." He glanced at me once more. "Therefore, I propose a toast, as almighty ruler of the Vamperic Kingdom."

He raised his glass. "To vampire kind!"

Forty red glasses were raised in the air, but a white one was not seen.

I left mine on the table, refusing to drink to the health of bloodsuckers.

Fabian turned to me with a hinting eyes, trying to tell me to raise my glass, but I didn't move. Kaspar, a few places down to my right, sat next to his father, raised his eyebrows at me, clearly displeased.

"What?" I mouthed back. He just shook his head, looking away.

The glasses were set back on the table silently, and I received more disapproving glares. I ignored them,

firm in the belief of my actions. The King sat down, and food was laid down on the table. It was soup. The King began eating, and so everyone followed.

I stared down at the assortment of knives, forks and spoons laid out in front of me, unsure of which to use. I looked around, looking for help, but Fabian and Ilta were already engaged in conversation with those sat next to them.

"Work from the outside in," a voice whispered from my left. I looked up, startled to see the vampire I didn't know talking to me.

"Thanks," I hissed back, taking up the spoon at the very edge. The vampire dipped his spoon into the soup, scooping away from him. I copied his actions, watching how he ate exactly.

I followed him, until I was sure of what I was doing. He smiled a little, amused. "I'm Alex," he whispered once more.

"Violet," I replied, returning his smile.

"Oh, I know," he chuckled. His dishwater blonde hair was swept back in a preppy style, and his large eyes

were a dark brown. His skin wasn't as pale as the English vampires, (he had an American accent), and he had a little stubble on his chin. His hands looked quite red - burnt.

I raised my eyebrows, displeased at the fact everyone knew my name, but he just laughed once more. "You are quite a funny girl," he said, still laughing a little.

"Thanks," I mumbled sarcastically, finishing off my soup.

"Listen, I want to apologise for the way my brother behaved towards you earlier, he is just a little... excitable." He jerked his head towards the vampire sat next to him - the one who had wolf whistled at me earlier. So they were brothers. That explained the likeness.

I smiled at his choice of words. He sounded like he was talking about a dog. "It's okay," I replied.

At that moment, Alex's brother looked around, and caught my eye. I groaned under my breath. "Hey human chick, I'm Lance." He winked at me, and I gripped the edge of my chair, trying not to puke. He

continued, trying to draw my attention. "You know baby, if I could rearrange the alphabet, I would put U and I together," he smirked.

I turned to glare at him.

"Really, because I would rearrange it so F and U were together." I flashed him my sarcastically innocent smile, and turned back to Alex, rolling my eyes.

"Sorry," he whispered again, rolling his eyes too. "I would tell him off, but you seem to have it under control!" He chuckled once more, and I giggled. "So, tell me Violet, what do you think of vampires?" he asked, feigning seriousness.

"Well, I think they are all arrogant, obnoxious, stuck-up twits, whose time is consumed by making my life hell. Why?" I grinned. He pouted, knowing I was joking. At least he thought I was joking.

"Even me?" he asked.

"Even you."

He lowered his voice. "Okay then, little Miss Vampire hater; what do you think of the royal family?"

My face fell. "They're alright, but the King is..." I trailed off. He nodded in understanding. "And I hate Kaspar." I finished.

He looked taken aback.

"What?" I asked.

"Me and Kaspar are mates."

Oops.

"Oh," I breathed, awkward. "Well, I guess he is kinda"-

"It's fine, you are entitled to an opinion." He forced a smile. We fell into silence for a while, in which Alex began to start talking to Fabian behind my back - literally. Guessing they were 'mates' too. Small world. By this time, we had already made our way through the first two courses, and I was beginning to get bored.

I was saved from my solitary vigil by the arrival of the main course. The vampires all had steak - cooked so rare that blood still oozed from the tender meat. I gagged. Poor animal.

I looked down at my plate, and was pleased to see something vegetarian. Braised mushrooms with linguine. My favourite. How convenient. (I will admit - I was a total foodie, something my father had hammered into me).

The room became quiet for a while, as everyone ate. I watched others eat, and I have to admit, it was really quite weird watching vampires eat normally: with knives and forks, eating human food.

As I continued to eat, I noticed that other consciences brushed against mine. I realized that the room was not silent; the vampires were having conversations - telepathically. I slumped a little in my chair, feeling left out like a little five year old. How sad.

Suddenly, a voice broke the silence. "I hear Violet, that you were accepted at Oxford University. Do tell us what you were planning to study," Ilta said, his slick voice breaking through the stillness.

"Oh, erm..." I said nervously, aware that most of the vampires seemed to have returned from their minds, and were now looking at me, interested. "I was going

to read law actually," I gushed, knowing it wouldn't go down too well.

It was pretty darn obvious that meant I was going to follow in my fathers footsteps.

A black box rattled deep within my mind, and I frowned a little, trying to remember what it contained.

My father... the Queen.

Oh fuck.

I need to forget. Quick.

Panic arose in my mind, and I desperately told myself that I knew nothing... I knew nothing.

I knew nothing.

Glances were exchanged, vampires all around the room raising eyebrows, muttering. Even the waiters looked up.

"Ah... I see." Ilta replied darkly. I looked at the floor, embarrassed. Every need to rebel seemed to have disappeared in the face of shame.

"You must be an exceedingly intelligent student," Alex intervened.

"I guess..."

"Who are you kidding; anyone can get into university these days!" Charity cut in with disdain.

"I cannot say I agree with that Charity. It takes an awful lot of hard work and determination," Fabian said, his eyes a little darker than usual, as the soft light lit them up.

"But, young Fabian, you cannot compare university to what it was when you attended. In these two centuries, much has changed." An extremely old man said. His silver-white hair was tied in a long ponytail, his beard flicked over his shoulders. He spoke to Fabian, but watched me with an increasingly pensive glare.

Much may have changed, but he sure hadn't.

"No, I may not, young mortal, but sometimes there is good reason to be stuck in one's ways."

I jumped six feet in the air, glancing nervously around the room, seeking for who had said those words.

"Try searching within your own mind, young one," the same voice said. Shocked, I realized the voice was in my head. But it wasn't MY voice. It was someone else's.

"Who... who are you?" I thought.

"I am Eaglen."

I turned my head slightly, to see the vampire with the long silver ponytail staring intensely at me. So he was called Eaglen.

"How are you talking to me?" I questioned.

"I am 500,000 years old, young mortal; at that age you acquire skills such as these." I saw, out of the corner of my eye, him smiling.

Wow. Seriously old dude. "Can you see everything in my mind?" I asked, uneasy.

"Yes. Do not worry yourself - your secrets are safe with me." With that, he left, leaving me shocked at the brief exchange.

I stared at the floor, as the argument over university continued. But I barely heard a word. The word blurred into one, and words became unrecognisable. A morose squawk broke the haze, and Charity's voice seemed vaguely familiar.

How could he do that? He offered no true explanation.

"He is Eaglen." My voice broke the train of thought. "He is the oldest surviving vampire, and no one knows how he does it. But he does."

"Oh," was my only reply.

"You must respect him," my voice commanded. The word "whatever," drifted through my thoughts.

"Okay, well I will just go then," the voice said.

"Hey, voice, can you see everything in my mind too?" I called, feeling stupid.

"No," it replied, and left. Man - it was jealous.

That is just how messed up my life is.

I slowly came back to reality. I noticed glasses were now empty, and a few lustful stares were coming my way. Glasses were hastily re-filled, but more and more vampires stared. Like sheep, as one looked, so did another.

Glasses continued to be filled at the King's order, but even now, the waiters were pausing, stopping to stare too.

I saw Alex and Kaspar exchange worried looks, and Fabian did the same, whilst discretely shuffling his chair nearer mine. Conversation died away, and the room rippled into hush.

Note to self: Do not be human and having your period whilst entertaining a roomful of vampires.

Eyes began to turn red. Red for bloodlust. A small protective circle was forming around me, consisting of Fabian, Ilta, and Alex. They seemed to have their desire under control, but their closeness unsettled me. I scanned the length of the table. Every vampire was watching me hungrily. Even Jag seemed to be

battling his thirst, although the rest of the vampires I knew seemed fine.

My heart sped up ten-fold, and I sensed danger. Extreme danger. My instincts screamed at me to get out of there. And to get out of there fast. But fear paralysed me, and my eyes were wide like a rabbit caught in headlights.

Growls began to ripple around the room, snarls distorting perfect red lips, swelling to a crescendo that was far from musical.

They wanted my blood. And they wanted it now.

Nothing else could satisfy them now.

"Violet, leave the room. Now!" The King ordered, his eyes running themselves across the room.

I didn't need telling twice. I scrabbled out of my chair, and backed to the wall. I felt my way across the room, too scared to turn my back on any of them. Every bloodthirsty pair of eyes followed me, until I reached the door and fell out, slamming the door behind me.

I leant against the wall of the corridor, breathing heavily. That had been close. Too close.

I knew I would receive no mercy from vampires that obsessed with my scent. Even now, I was not safe.

A couple of tears escaped my sore eyes, and I wished for nothing more than my bed. At home. Where it was safe. A knot of homesickness formed in my stomach once more.

At that moment, the door quietly opened, and Kaspar slipped out.

"You okay?" he asked stiffly. I nodded wordlessly, swallowing back a sob.

"They won't attack you, you know," he said. I looked up at him disbelievingly. "Really. There are not that stupid." I managed a small smile.

"Not that stupid?" I queried.

"If they kill you, there will be an all out war. Believe it or not, we don't want that," he replied glumly.

"You don't, but they do," I replied, equally as sullen. "This meeting - it's about me, isn't it? That is why the

council has assembled," I sighed, already knowing the answer.

He nodded mutely.

"Why? Why now?"

He sighed, and leant up against the wall beside me. "Because we have been informed by... someone, that the slayers have made a truce with a group of rogues. They plan to attack us, take you... and... and destroy the monarchy."

I struggled for breath, looking down at the floor. Guilt began to wash over me.

I didn't want to start a war.

Is this really what humanity was? Is this really, what they would do?

Is this what I was a part of?

DID I WANT TO BE A PART OF IT?

"I"-

"Don't bother, no slayer will set foot here," Kaspar interjected. He stared blankly at the opposite wall,

deep in thought. My heart panged as I thought of his mother, and what it must do to him.

Greg had hurt enough, but what if it had been my mother of two hundred years? How would I feel then? How would I feel if my family had just fallen apart, every hope, every dream, gone? It was incomprehensible.

"Life is so crap sometimes," I mumbled to myself.

"Tell me about it," I heard his low voice say, ever so softly. I turned to him, surprised. He felt my gaze, and turned too.

"I won't be safe here anymore, will I?"

In an instant, he was right in front of me, breathing heavily on my neck, his chest rising and falling in time to mine. I felt my heartbeat quicken, my breaths becoming raspy. He looked down at me through solemn eyes, and feelings of lust raced through my veins.

"You were never safe here Violet Lee."

His lowered his head to my neck, his hands settling themselves on my hips. I backed as far into the wall as I could, but he just pushed himself further into me. I was shaking, and my hands clenched into fists, my body tensing, waiting for the onslaught of pain.

I tried pushing him away, but he didn't move, I doubt he even felt me trying to escape. His fangs met my neck, grazing the skin. I whimpered, turning my head away. He took a deep breath, inhaling my scent. His mouth opened wider, and he prepared to bite-

"Kaspar...please"-

A single tear rolled down my cheek, as I resorted to begging.

"Kaspar," I whispered.

He pulled away, his eyes slowly opening. Another tear slid down my cheek, and he gently wiped it away with his thumb.

"I don't understand why you don't get it, Violet Lee." He cupped my cheek with his hand, before running it down the length of my neck and side, until it came to rest on my hip once more. "I... we, lust you, for your

blood, for your body. You want it too - I can see it in your eyes, feel it in your heartbeat."

My eyes searched for the floor, but I could only see him.

"You don't get, that right now I could snap you in half and suck you dry. You don't get that you are food, and that we struggle to see you as a living creature. An equal. Because your not."

More tears plummeted to the ground, as tiny droplets of water.

"And you don't get that I am a person... with feelings," I breathed.

He backed away a little, taking his hands off me, searching my face with his eyes.

"No... no, I don't," he breathed back. "You are never safe here Violet Lee. Remember that. Never."

He turned his back to me, and I could him breathing, see his hands balling into fists, fighting the urge to bite. He turned back, placing his hands against the wall either side of my head.

"Stay away from Ilta Crimson," he said, his eyes burning.

"Why?" I asked, surprised.

"Because I don't trust him," he replied, menace fuelling his words.

"You. Don't. Trust him?" I mouthed, surprised. What was there not to trust about him? "But he is so nice! In case you didn't notice, he wasn't trying to bite my head off back there, I think he is the least of my worries!" I said, my voice rising to a crescendo.

"God damn it girl! Why don't you just listen to me?! Stay away from him! Just trust me!" he yelled back, all softness in his nature gone.

"Trust you?" I squealed. "Why on earth would I trust you? You kidnapped me! You constantly try to suck my blood! Or get me into bed! Trust you? I'm safer with Ilta than I ever will be with you!"

"You don't know him! You don't know what he is capable of!" Kaspar roared back, grabbing my shoulders, and shaking me.

"No. Your right. I don't know him," I replied, more calmly, taking deep breaths. He loosened his grip on me, and I sidestepped away from him.

"But I know him better than I do you," I spat. His face lit up with anger, his eyes turning pure black.

I turned and walked away, fuming. How dare he tell me whom I can and can't associate with!

"Where the hell are you going?" he shouted down the corridor after me.

"TO MY ROOM!" I screamed back, spinning to face him. Our eyes met, and I glared at him for a full minute.

"On your own head be it girly. Don't say I didn't warn you!" he snarled.

I turned on my heel, and stormed off up the hall, towards the stairs. But as I reached the end, another thought came into my mind. I span around to see Kaspar staring at me, anger still evident in his face.

"You know what Kaspar? I wish you had just killed me back in London! Just ended it there! Then I

wouldn't have to suffer this! Why didn't you! WHY?" I shrieked, and turned, running... running away from... him.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

"You know what Kaspar? I wish you had just killed me back in London! Just ended it there! Then I wouldn't have to suffer this! Why didn't you! WHY?" she shrieked down the corridor, before turning and running into the shadows of the corridor.

"Your Highness, you father requests your presence immediately." A waiter had appeared outside the door, stiff, avoiding eye contact.

"Of course. I shall be in presently," I replied.

I let all my anger, hurt and worry wash away, melt away into the floor, until I was numb once more, and the blankness a Varn must carry returned to my face. But one thought still lingered in my bleak mind.

Why hadn't I killed her?

Why?

The truth was.

I didn't know.

Chapter 19

# Dinner with a vampire. Did I mention I'm vegetarian? (19)

Dinner with a vampire. Did I mention I'm vegetarian? (Chapter 19)

Okay guys, I don't know how I did it, but here is the next chapter... already! Thank you to all my new fans, [and old ones of course =) Sanjana, Sianeve1, Pipix101, kTigaa1894, Rachloves2write, jemsparkle, SidneyArden, DarknessandLight being some of my oldest, hehe, not in a wrinkly way guys!]

And if you commented on the last chapter - you are A M A Z I N G, and get a virtual hug XD

Anyways... It is a little shorter than usual, but I wanted to write this as soon as possible, I am on a roll at the moment!

So... read, vote, comment... and most of all, ENJOY!!!

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iMA0wj4lcV8 (In Pieces by Linkin Park)

HYPERLINK "http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oxFvdunfv-4" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oxFvdunfv-4 (Lacrymosa by Evanescence)

I lay splayed out on my bed, staring at the ceiling, beyond crying now.

I had cried too many tears already for vampires.

Lumps formed in my throat, and every sob threatened to break through, but I kept my silent vigil.

Homesickness overtook me, and I wanted to cry... so much. But I refused to give into temptation.

I could not cry!

I WOULD NOT CRY!

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

I leant up against the banister of the balcony, looking over the picturesque grounds. The tress swayed gently in the breeze, and in the distance, a few birds flew high into the sky, squawking, scared by something. They flew north, away from here, towards the wide-open expanse of the North Sea, which I knew was not far over the horizon.

I closed my eyes, listening to the non-existent twitters of birds who knew to stay far away from here. Most creatures did.

This place was devoid of life. Of living, breathing creatures.

Instead, it was full of those whose hearts were dead, whose blood did not move. Full of those that should be dead, according to every law of nature, but somehow still managed to survive.

I sighed.

Another day gone, another day wasted. This was just my life. Repeated negotiations, talks, meetings,

hunting, killing, meetings, dances, meetings, sex, and meetings.

Was that all there was to my life?

Power?

The sun was fast disappearing below the horizon, and twilight was setting in. The sky was a lilac shade, the clouds a violet colour. The air was bitterly cold for August, but I barely noticed it - it was far warmer than I ever would be.

The one thing I despised the most had consumed my life.

Power.

I smacked the stone railings in frustration. Why? Why did my mother have to go and get herself killed?

Why did she always have to try to make things better, when they were just fine?

WHY?

Those questions buzzed around my head, tormenting me. I had thought of every one a thousand times, but still no damned person had given me an answer. I

punched the stone again, this time chipping a little chunk off.

"Shit," I cursed, brushing the chunk of the side of the balcony. I turned on my heel, and walked inside, slamming the door shut behind me. Stupid stone. I grabbed my guitar, and began quietly playing, but quickly gave up. It was no use. My mother's face filled my mind, and all I could hear was her beautiful laughter.

I threw the guitar aside, and fell back onto my bed. A single tear threatened to drop, but I blinked it back.

I could not cry. I needed those tears. I could only cry once a year, and now would not be that once.

I would not cry.

A faint heartbeat reached my ears, and I knew it was Violet's. She was crying - I could tell from her spluttering heart that I had grown so accustomed to.

I listened to it lazily, becoming more and more relaxed as it returned to its normal steady beat. My eyes began to droop, falling into the relaxed state that was as close to sleep as I could get. I smiled a

little: the meeting had been postponed for a few weeks, meaning we were council-free for a while. On the down side, that meant Alex and Lance would be flying back over the Atlantic right now. I hadn't even gone hunting with Alex. We had planned so many hunting trips, never getting around to them, duty, and obligation to family always getting in the way.

My eyes shut, and dreams began to swirl around my mind. Somewhere down below, a clock struck nine, and I reluctantly opened my eyes. I still had two hours until Charity returned, and there was stuff to do. I swung off the bed, grabbed my converse, and went to search for Fabian.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

The tears dried on my face, and I pouted, disappointed with myself for crying. I had to pull myself together.

Why couldn't I just accept reality?

The truth was, whatever happened, conflict was impossible.

Either, I could stay and wait to be rescued, and start a war. Or I could become a vampire, go against everything I believe in, and start a war.

What other options did I have?

And even if I did become a vampire, and was allowed to see my family again, who was to say I wouldn't bite their heads off?

Somewhere down below, in the dark depths of the mansion, a clock struck nine. A door nearby slammed, and I grabbed a pillow, thrusting it over my ears, craving peace and quiet. Eventually, I fell into a troubled sleep.

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A black cloak billowed in the gentle breeze as a vampire sped through the forest, racing to reach the catacombs.

He had little time, he knew that.

He ran faster, pushing himself to his limits, allowing the all-too-familiar scent to guide him. He stopped at the high point - the top of the hill that sheltered the

southern side of the Varn's estate. He looked around, smiling to himself. At one time, he may have appreciated the beauty of such a view - the Thames in the distance, the little hamlet a few miles away - Varnsfield, which doubled up as a perfectly secluded hunting ground. And if you looked hard enough, you could the North-Kent marshes, once a ideal trap for unsuspecting humans. And here, the Varnley forest, which stretched for miles, over the rare but imposing hills that only Varnley could boast.

But who could appreciate such beauty, when you were focused on other more... crucial matters?

He span around sniffing the air, before leaping thirty foot into the air and landing deep in the forest. He was close now - very close.

He reached the bottom of the hill, and within seconds, was at the foot of a stone door. He pushed it open, inhaling the air. He closed his eyes for a moment, enjoying the stench of fresh blood that was now reaching his nostrils.

His eyes swept across the room, until they came to rest on a young girl, tied to the legs of the great stone

throne that guarded the catacombs. Her head dropped, and there was no colour in her cheeks. Huge gashes on her neck oozed blood, and her slutty make-up had smudged across her face. Her clothes were ripped, leaving her almost naked. Her smooth breasts were covered in small scratches, and her stomach looked red and swollen, like she had been punched several times. The frayed rope tied around her wrists had gauged out chunks of skin, and a bone penetrated the skin where her ankle should be.

He looked on, disgusted.

The rogues could have at least brought him something a little more appetizing.

And to think he had spent all that time hand picking them, the rogues who would serve him well - not betray him. Looks as though they just did.

He would remind them of their place later.

He stepped foreword. His footstep echoed in the silence, and the girl slowly looked up, her eyes struggling to focus oh him.

"Who... who... are you?" She croaked.

"Who I am is of no consequence, but what I am is of far more concern to you," he taunted, smiling feverishly to himself.

Her eyes widened in fear, and she attempted to scrabble back, away from him, but the ropes bound her tightly.

"Please"-

He cut her off. "What is your name?"

"Sa... Sarah."

He smiled once again, revealing his gleaming fangs. "Well Sarah. I have two choices for you." He took another step foreword, stooping down to her level. "You and I can have a little bit of fun, and you can become one of us, once I am done with you of course, or you can become my dinner, and I will not give you the option of eternal life. Your call."

Her eyes widened, and tears trickled down her cheek.

"Please... please... just kill me. Please...," she sobbed.

The smiled dropped from his face. This was not what he wanted. Lust and thirst were pumping through his system, driven by his dead heart, and he wanted to have his way.

He wiped her tears away with his thumb, grimacing as grime coated his fingers. He gently stroked her cheek, fighting to keep his calm demeanour.

"Are you sure Sarah? We could have so much fun...," he prompted, turning the charm on. No human girl could refuse that.

"Please... it hurts too much. Please... just... kill me. End it!" she sobbed, her head drooping once more, and he knew unconsciousness would soon envelop her, sheltering her from the pain.

He would not let her get away that easily.

He quickly took hold of her neck with both hands, wrenching her free of the ropes.

"You're lucky I am a merciful vampire."

And with that, he broke her frail neck, almost snapping her in two. The horrendous crack! Echoed

in the stillness. He felt her go limp, and her body slumped into his arms. So thirsty now, he yanked her neck towards his waiting fangs, and quickly began to drink.

Her blood was bitter, and nowhere near satisfying, but it would do for now. He wished for something sweeter, like... he shook his head. He picked up the mangled body in his arms, and walked outside, tossing the corpse hundreds of meters into the dark forest.

The wolves would have a feast tonight.

A tiny trickle of blood escaped his lips, and running down his chin. He wiped it away, smiling frenziedly to himself, already wishing for more.

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I sat bolt upright in bed, screaming, the horrendous sound echoing off the walls. Cold beads of sweat ran down my forehead, and I was shivering; gagging for breath between screams.

"VIOLET!"

The door burst open to reveal Fabian and Lyla, both carrying panicked expressions.

"Violet, are you okay?" Lyla asked breathlessly, rushing over to me, untangling me from the mass of sheets that entangled my form. In a blink, Fabian was there too, pulling me deep into his embrace, pushing my sweaty hair out of my face, and wrapping his strong arms around me.

Dry sobs tickled my throat, and I took quick shallow breaths, desperate for air, trying to nod my head but failing.

"What's wrong? What's happened?" Fabian asked urgently, not bothering to try to hide the worry from his voice.

"I... I was asleep," I began, confused, my eyes darting about the room, searching for non-existent answers.

"A dream? Was it a dream Violet?" Fabian cooed, calming, beginning to gently rock me back and forth.

"Sshh, what was it about? Why was it so bad?" Lyla soothed, stroking my hair. I now took deep

shuddering breaths, soothed by Fabian's hold, but unsure of whether to tell them.

"There... there was a man. And... and a girl. He... he killed her," I sobbed, the tickling feeling returning. Bile rose in my throat as I thought of her begging to die... I gagged, and Fabian rubbed my back. I forced myself not to be sick.

"Have you had dreams like it before?" Lyla questioned her voice urgent now. My thoughts swirled. "Violet?"

I nodded mutely, unable to talk.

"Always about the same person?"

I nodded again. Lyla's eyes darted about, turning a funny off-colour white. Fabian had stopped rubbing my back, and sat there stiffly, hardly moving.

"Violet..." I looked up. "This... this man... was he a vampire?"

"Yes," I breathed.

Fabian and Lyla exchanged worried looks, staring at one another as though they had just seen death.

I looked from one to another, searching for answers.

They were hiding something.

"What does it mean?" I asked.

"Nothing, they mean nothing. They are just nightmares," Fabian muttered, unconvincingly.

No.

No, they were not just nightmares.

There were real.

Chapter 20

# Dinner with a vampire. Did I mention I'm vegetarian? (20)

Dinner with a vampire. Did I mention I'm vegetarian? (Chapter 20)

OMG... CHAPTER 20! ALREADY!!!

Oh, I just love a certain part of this chapter. Hahahahahaha!!!

Ok, so with the songs, (if you listen to them) only play the second one (Yeah, by Kelly Clarkson) after the words "Far off in another land..." You'll see why XD

Shout out to my fans... you make writing worth it, seriously! Comments make me skip to school. And I have maths first almost everyday!

If you a new fan, well welcome to my madness hehe ^^

Old fans - watch out, I'm hyper! ^^

Okay, so hope you enjoy, comment, and vote if you are in the mood!

Canse12

=D

X

And seriously guys - I am totally blown over, astounded, amazed, flabbergasted, shocked, dumbfounded, and happy of course, at the amount of reads, votes, and most AMAZING fans "Dinner with a vampire..." has. I can think of so many more adjectives to describe how stunned I am at the popularity of this story. But none of them are quite right. Because, truth be told, this was just something to distract me from my more serious writing (I was writing two other books), and yes - even more serious than this =D But I now honestly think, with your encouragement, my writing is the best it has

ever been, and I love this story, and how it is developing. (Hmm... I sound big-headed =S).

So yeah... that was me going soppy on you all... XD

Virtual hugs all round!!!

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hoSultqeVXs&NR=1 (Perchance to Dream by Two Steps from Hell)

HYPERLINK "http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Bg49T6vV_M" http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Bg49T6vV_M (Yeah by Kelly Clarkson)

And that is how my life progressed for the next couple of weeks. Dream... nightmare after nightmare, troubling me night after night.

Every night I would wake up in a cold sweat, breathing heavily. Sometimes I would scream, but the vampires soon learnt to ignore me. Because of course, they could hear me. I knew they sat downstairs, discussing me, discussing my dreams, keeping me in the dark.

It drove me insane.

I had a right to know why I was suddenly having these nightmarish imaginings.

Didn't I?

Crawling back out from under my bed, I flopped onto the bed. Today was the 27th August. Which meant tomorrow was the 28th.

My eighteenth birthday.

I was becoming a legal adult a hostage.

Yippee.

I propped myself up against a couple of pillows, staring blankly into space.

I should be out partying, opening presents, having my first legal drink of alcohol.

Big emphasis on the LEGAL.

Not lying on a bed, in the middle of nowhere, afraid to go to sleep. All whilst facing the constant threat of thirty odd vampires that occupied the household.

Life really does suck.

I gaped at the piano for a minute, contemplating whether to play anything or not. Absentmindedly, I decided I would. I floated over to the black instrument, dropped onto the stool, and just sat there for a while, not knowing what to play.

And then I smiled sardonically to myself.

Slowly, and lamely, I began playing happy birthday.

"Happy birthday... to me - for tomorrow," I muttered, singing totally out of tune, but not really caring. I wonder how my parents would feel, tomorrow. And Lily. How was Lily?

"Happy birthday... to me - for tomorrow," I repeated. I wonder if I could call my family? Hear them say happy birthday, so close, yet so far. They might as well be a million miles away.

"Happy birthday, dear meeEEE..." I wonder if being an adult would feel any different? I doubted it.

"Happy birthday, to me - for tomorrow," I finished sombrely, changing to a minor key at the end. I had to sing happy birthday to myself... how sad was that?

I glanced at the clock. It was going on 10 o'clock, and I was very tired. I didn't want to sleep... I really didn't. I was too afraid of the nightmares I knew would ensue as soon as I closed me eyes. But I had no choice. My body was screaming at me to sleep, disgusted at my self-neglect. I grabbed a tank top and a pair of shorts, quickly changed, and climbed into bed.

I tugged the sheets right up to my chin, hoping the warmth would somehow drive away the nightmares. I was glad my period was long gone - the stomach cramps were beginning to bug me. I reached over, switched the gothic lamp off, and gradually closed my eyes.

Almost immediately, sinister clouds began to churn around my mind, and the dark forest I was now so familiar with came into view. Even in my dream like state, I tensed, waiting to become this unknown monster. To hear his thoughts, to see through his eyes, to feed as he did.

To become, in a sense, the creature I despised so much.

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The burning in his throat only intensified as he flitted back through the thick trees. His acute eyesight could make out the glistening water, far in front, and he was drawn to the light like a moth, following only his primal instinct.

The scent he followed - it was so beautiful, so mouth watering, so... luscious, he was surprised vampires from all over Kent were not following this same trail. It was weeks old, many, many weeks old, perhaps a month even, but appetizing all the same. He thought it vaguely familiar, but its age made it impossible to tell.

A scrap of black material, snagged on a nearby bramble caught his attention, and he stopped, dropping into a low crouch.

Yes - the scent was strong here.

He pulled the material from the branch, leaving a few strands behind it was so tangled. Whoever had come past here had been in a hurry. He weighed it in his hand for a moment, and recognised it as quite an

expensive silk, or perhaps satin, that could only belong to a dress.

So it was a female's scent. That would explain the irresistible pull.

He lifted the scrap to his nose, inhaling deeply. He smiled giddily to himself. The scent was mind-blowing; he could almost feel her blood on his lips. It was like incense - filling his every desire with just one whiff, so enthralling, intoxicating, it was a thousand times better than drugs ever had been.

Even better than opium.

Reluctantly, he slipped the fragment into an inner pocket of his cloak. He would save it for his more dire moments.

He continued on. The water was nearing, and he now knew it to be a lake.

Well of course.

He neared it, the scent only becoming stronger, and he was sure now that he had joined the exact route

of this mysterious, yet alluring human girl. He broke through the trees, and leapt into the vast clearing.

How could he have been so stupid? He knew where he was now, and he silently cursed himself for becoming so wrapped up in his instincts.

He stood on the earthy banks of a great lake, its dark depths shimmering in the moonlight. A low mist clung to the air, dancing above the surface of the water. It looked... oddly beautiful... darkly beautiful.

"Like me," he thought. He smirked at his own crude joke, walking slowly towards the edge. He watched in awe as the giant squid emerged, breaking the surface with a great splash, water flying in every direction. It floated lazily about, watching him with six-foot wide eyes, curious. It tentacles curved, forming great arches above the water. His mouth fell open a little, revealing his milky white fangs. This creature truly would never cease to amaze him.

Dragging his eyes away, he followed the trail again. It led back into the forest, and he doubled back on himself for a while, before the trail veered off in a different direction. Dead pine needles crunched

under his feet, as he walked slower, at a more human pace. He was wary now.

He walked for twenty minutes or so, tiring of this slow pace. The darkness encapsulated him, the scent his only solace. His eyesight was far too weak: he needed to feed. He had not eaten properly in three days, and it showed.

A niggling feeling in the back of his mind bugged him. Something was not right here...

"It was a stupid idea," his conscience snapped, and he ignored it, tired of the trappings of his ludicrous mind, the part he hid from every other vampire.

Eventually, he saw light in the distance, and he pulled the hood of his cloak back over his head. He approached it cautiously, caught up in the delicious smell that now drove him frantic, so much so, he had no idea where he now was. But he did have enough sense to be vigilant.

He leapt silently from log to log, frowning as he passed a pond to his right. Why was that there? But all he knew was, that whatever this place was, it was

surrounded by the stench of human blood - so strong, his throat smouldered.

The light turned to a friendly warm glow, and he approached the edge of the forest, letting his eyes adjust to this newfound light. He was greeted by an enormous stately home, it's gothic windows illuminated by that very same warm glow, and he could make out chandeliers hung high in elaborate rooms.

He knew this place.

"Oh," he gasped. How could he have been so stupid?

"Easily," his mind breathed, inhaling a sharp breath as he did.

A gust of air blew his way, ruffling his hair, and an overpowering aroma filled his nostrils.

Blood.

His lips rolled back over his gums, revealing his fangs, and he snarled.

He stepped out of the shadows, into the inviting light that rolled down the sloping lawns.

It had been too long...

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Far off in another land, I heard bells chiming, resonating in the silence my dream had left behind.

"DONG!" they went, twelve times.

I seemed to be rolling and rolling, and I shivered in my blackened dreamless state. The air had got cooler, wherever I was... far, far cooler.

And then it went sub-zero.

"ARGH!!!"

I scarpered up, sitting bolt upright in bed, screaming at the top of my lungs. My sheets were plastered to my legs, and I was soaked. Someone... or something, had just poured freezing cold water onto me as I slept.

I heard several suppressed giggles, and a low chuckle. In the darkness, I could just make out numerous dark figures surrounding my bed, outlined by the moonlight shining through my windows.

"WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT FOR?!?" I screeched, shivering.

"HAPPY BIRTHDAY!" Fabian sung, way, way, too delighted...

*

***THIS IS A SAMPLE ONLY***

(And that was mentioned, in bold and italics, at the very beginning of the story, so no mean comments please. I ask you to understand that writing professionally is my job, *how I survive and help support my family,* and that sometimes the necessities of living conflict with the interests of readers, namely, I can't always give away all my content for free. Be considerate of authors on Wattpad who, like me, sometimes can't do as they'd wish, and publish their stories for free).

THE REST OF THE STORY IS AVAILABLE TO BUY AS A BOOK, PUBLISHED BY HARPERCOLLINS. Please check out Amazon, or your local book store to find it. I also have links available on my profile.

THE SEQUEL, AUTUMN ROSE, IS AVAILABLE FOR PRE-ORDER. Check out Amazon for more details.

That's it for now, folks! The end of the sample. Hooked? Curious? Well, The Dark Heroine: Dinner With A Vampire is available to buy, in its full, edited form, as both an ebook and paperback. Simply head on over to your favourite book-buying store/site/device and you're away!

Chapter 21

# The sequel to The Dark Heroine: Dinner with a Vampire

FANGSTERS. I’m back (ta-da!)

I’ve had an amazing though very busy time over the last couple of years with the release of The Dark Heroine: Dinner with a Vampire, writing my second book, and fitting in all my papers and exams at Oxford (hence near disappearing online recently, sorry! My tutors would eat me otherwise. Degrees are hard. Why did nobody tell me this?!)

But now, I’m so excited to announce that my next book, Autumn Rose (that's the TDH/DWAV sequel for all you AWOL lot), will be published in January! I’m going to be sharing the first few chapters with you

over the next few weeks - I hope you enjoy it! My publishers have asked me to tell you where you can buy it, so if you're interested, the links are below. Happy reading! (You will have enforced fun reading this. YOU WILL BE HAPPY. Because Kaspar is sparkling. And Kaspar is watching you).

Best,

Abbie :)

Start reading Autumn Rose: http://www.wattpad.com/31515602-autumn-rose

**UK links**

Amazon: http://www.amazon.co.uk/The-Dark-Heroine-Autumn-Rose/dp/0007504993/ref=tmm_pap_title_0?ie=UTF8&qid=1352207262&sr=8-1
iTunes: https://itunes.apple.com/gb/book/autumn-rose-dark-heroine-book/id609749989?mt=11
Waterstones: http://www.waterstones.com/waterstonesweb/products/abigail+gibbs/autumn+rose/9484059/

**US links**

Amazon: http://www.amazon.com/dp/0062248758/ref=cm_sw_su_dp?tag=harpercollinsus-20
Barnes & Noble: http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/autumn-rose-abigail-gibbs/1116240803?cm_mmc=affiliates-_-linkshare-_-mdxm68jzjz8-_-10%3a1&ean=9780062248756&isbn=9780062248756&r=1
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